The Middlebury Campus

VOL. CXX, No. 7 | MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT, NOVEMBER 4, 2021 | MIDDLEBURYCAMPUS.COM

Student suffers near-critical medical emergency at Marriott Hotel without support from Public Safety

By SOPHIA McDERMOTT-HUGHES
Editor at Large

Zoe Sipe '23.5 waited to die in the parking lot of the Middlebury Marriott.

She lay on the cold concrete the night of Oct. 14, the rain spraying her face as her throat constricted tighter and tighter, gradually cutting off oxygen flow to her brain. Waiting for her friend to take her to the hospital for her severe allergic reaction, she thought, "This is not the way I want to go out."

Sipe had called Public Safety to take her to Porter Hospital at 11:15 p.m., 20 minutes earlier, before her symptoms became critical and she began contemplating her death. But the officer who answered the phone reportedly told her that they could not travel off the main campus to help her. In the time it took for her friends to give up on arguing with the officer over the phone and begin calling other students to drive her instead, Sipe realized the reaction was threatening her life.

Her friend sped down dark roads through the rain. By the time she arrived at Porter Medical Center, it was too late for epinephrine. The doctors flushed her with a cocktail of other medications, and she felt the blessed relief of her throat opening up, critical moments before it was about to close, likely forever, Sipe said.

Josh Ziegler '23.5 and Griffin Fill '23, both residents of the Marriot and friends of Sipe who were with her that night, say that the failure of the college to help her during her near-death experience is indicative of a lack of resources, planning and attention put into the 34 students living off the main campus at the Marriott and the Inn on the Green. In addition to Public Safety officers not responding that night, neither the Marriott nor the Inn on the Green had any on-site or specifically-designated staff support at the time. In

Continued on Page 2

Allegations of wage theft and labor misconduct persist at college-partnered dairy farm

COURTESY OF GLENN RUSSELL/VTDIGGER

(From left) Goodrich Farm Co-Owner Danielle Goodrich Gingras, Goodrich Farm Co-Owner Chase Goodrich, Vermont Gas Systems CEO Neale Lunderville, Vermont Governor Phil Scott, Vermont Lieutenant Governor Molly Gray and Middlebury College Treasurer David Provost open the valve between the biodigester and its pipeline in July.

By JAKE GAUGHAN
Editor at Large

The largest anaerobic biogas digester in the Northeast began production on Goodrich Family Farm in Salisbury on July 21. Standing beside Vermont Governor Phil Scott and Lieutenant Governor Molly Gray at the summer kickoff ceremony was the college's executive vice president for finance and administration and treasurer, David Provost. Renewable natural gas produced by the digester will provide about one third of the energy that the college uses for heating and cooling — at the time, Provost called this partnership "critical" in helping Middlebury reach its renewable energy goals.

In remarks at the July 21 kickoff event, Governor Scott claimed the development as a victory for the state. "Think about it — we've got a Vermont farm, a Vermont utility, a Vermont college and national energy innovators all coming together to build a model for our region," he said. "And it can be replicated in other parts of the state, and country, as well. This is truly transformative work that Vermonters can be proud of."

But former workers at Goodrich Farm, activists and Middlebury students say that the celebration around the new biodigester is overlooking a long history of employment abuse and wage theft at the farm. Many of these workers contacted Migrant Justice, a Burlington-based migrant labor advocacy group, whose organizers assisted two former workers in filing Vermont Department of Labor complaints against the farm. Allegations of withheld wages, retaliatory behaviors by employers and unsafe living conditions were leveled by former workers and Migrant Justice organizers who spoke with The Campus.

Development of the Goodrich biodigester project had been in the works since 2009, when, according to the college's Director of Facilities Mike Moser, Integrated Energy Solutions connected the college with Goodrich Farm. Integrated Energy Solutions was the former developer of the project before Vanguard Renewables, the renewable energy company which now owns and operates the plant, joined the project in 2017. Ground finally broke on the plant's development in 2019. Vanguard is responsible for the operations of the digester and pays an annual lease payment to Goodrich Farm.

The Campus spoke with Migrant Justice organizers, former Goodrich Family Farm employees, student activists and Middlebury College administrators about the history of the college's relationship with the farm and the labor misconduct allegations that have surfaced in the last year and a half.

INITIAL ALLEGATIONS

After José Ramos was fired from his job at Goodrich in February 2020, the farm withheld the last week of his pay, a check worth around $600, according to Migrant Justice organizer Abel Luna. Ramos reached out to Migrant Justice, which offered to help him petition for his pay. In late February, Luna accompanied Ramos to the farm to request Ramos' paycheck. Ramos only speaks Spanish, so Luna acted as his interpreter.

Luna said that, after arriving at the farm, the farm manager confronted him and Ramos and asked them to leave. The farm manager then told Ramos that he would not receive his paycheck and called Danielle Goodrich Gingras, one of the co-owners of the farm, according to Luna.

Luna asserts that Goodrich Gingras then ran into the barn, yelling at Ramos and demanding Luna and Ramos to leave the farm. According to Luna, Goodrich Gingras then repeated that she would not pay Ramos.

According to Luna, the situation then escalated. "She started getting a little bit violent. She closed the door on the barn, blocking both of us inside the parlor. And initially she started pushing José against the wall, you know, trying to hit him. And I managed to open the door again. We were in fear of our safety, basically."

Continued on Page 5

NEWS IN BRIEF: Middlebury's endowment grows by 37.4 percent

By JACK MCGUIRE
Contributing Writer

Middlebury's endowment grew by about 37.4% — or $398.3 million — from the previous fiscal year, said Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration David Provost in an email to the Middlebury community on Oct. 25.

Due to the fiscal uncertainty created by the Covid-19 pandemic due to things such as lost tuition, program cancellations and necessary investments in things like personal protective equipment, the administration predicted that Middlebury would experience financial hardship. However, Provost said the endowment's growth from $1.1 billion to $1.5 billion and the college's overall budget deficit of only $11.9 million compared to the projected $18.5 million deficit are positive steps.

"These losses posed significant challenges to our operations, our instruction, and to our desire to maintain wage and benefit continuity to all our employees," Provost said. "Nevertheless, we were able to minimize their impact."

This increased revenue comes after the college took controversial measures in previous years to try to create economic stability. The college increased tuition for the 2020–21 academic year by 3% despite the financial hardships faced by families because of the Covid-19 pandemic, sparking criticism from parents and students. In addition, last year, the Board of Trustees instructed the college to raise tuition again, limit the endowment draw to

COURTESY OF BENJY RENTON

Men's soccer celebrates their win against Wesleyan in front of fans on Saturday, Oct. 30. The Panthers won in a penalty shootout, 5–4, after the match finished 0–0. ***Turn to Page 11 to read about all of the Panther victories in our Midd athelics Week in Review.***

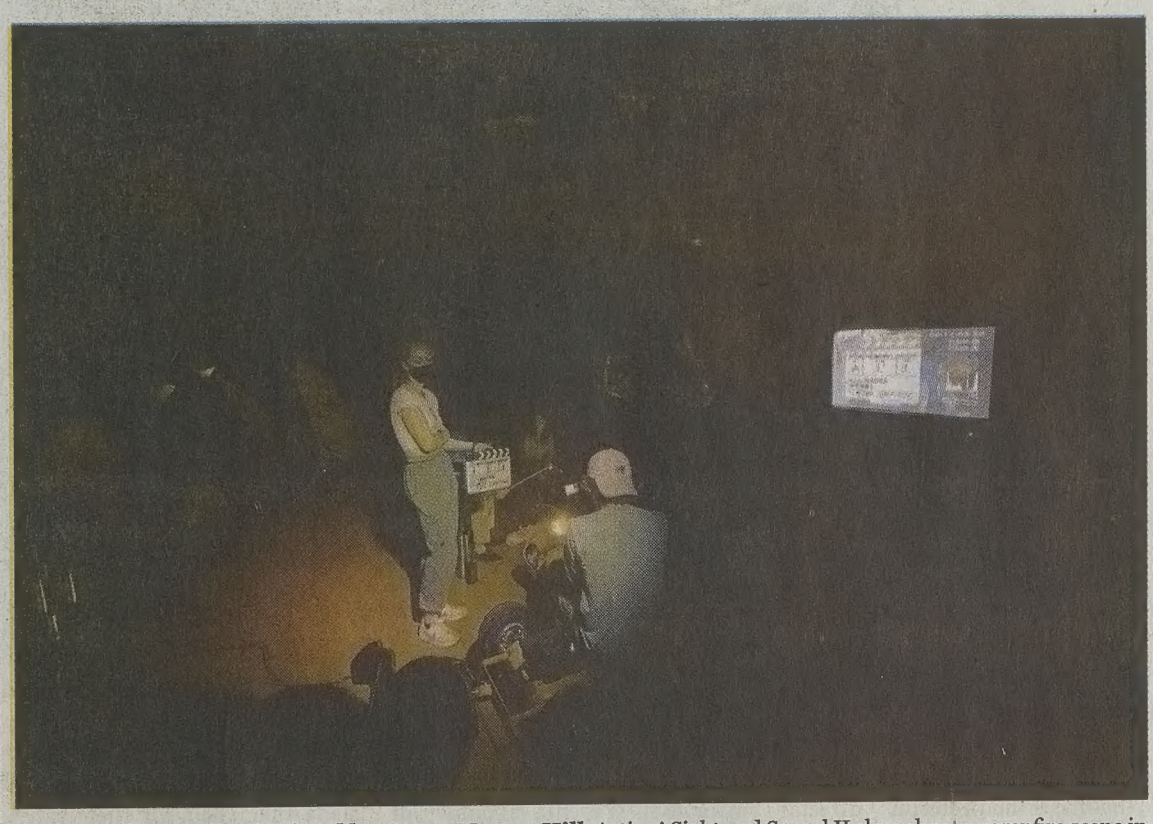


Photo of the Week submitted by Owen Mason-Hill. Action! Sight and Sound II class shoot a campfire scene in the Production Studio. *To submit a Photo of the Week to The Campus, visit go/photooftheweek*

NEWS

Club sports struggle to compete with limited funds
By RYAN MCELROY

Demitria Kirby named new Director of Public Safety
By CHARLIE KEOHANE

▶PAGE 2

LOCAL

Community Supper takes new form during the pandemic
By MANYA KULA

Growing Food for Addison County: The Knoll's Partnership with Local Nonprofit HOPE
By MAGGIE REYNOLDS

▶ PAGE 4

OPINIONS

Silence is Deadly: Why we need to talk about suicide
By SOPHIA McDERMOTT-HUGHES

Writing and striking from the precipice of the climate
By EMILY THOMPSON

▶ PAGE 6

ARTS & CULTURE

"The Orphan Muses" unpacks Canada's most dysfunctional family
By JACQUELINE QIU

Evo Dance Crew resurrects inclusive dance at Midd after a year without shows
By ALEXANDRA BURNS

▶ PAGE 8

SPORTS

Despite first-round playoff loss to Colby, men's rugby reflects positively on fall season
By CHARLES CROUNSE

After a first-round playoff loss to Colby last Saturday, the season is over for men's rugby. But despite their exit from competition ...

▶ PAGE 10

NEWS IN BRIEF:

Demitria Kirby named new Director of Public Safety

By CHARLIE KEOHANE
Editor at Large

Demitria Kirby began her role as the Demitria Kirby began her role as the new director of Public Safety on campus on Oct. 25, taking over from Dan Gaiotti, who has been serving as interim director since September 2020.

Kirby comes to Middlebury from a background working with youth and families. She worked in child protective services for the state of New Hampshire and most recently served as the Youth Services Manager for the city of Keene, N.H., providing prevention, education and intervention services to youth.

Kirby also worked in a juvenile court diversion program, where she used more education and skill-building practices with youth.

"Restorative work was in the hopes that next time they were in a risky situation, they would have that kind of toolkit of their own to be able to offer them a different path," Kirby said.

Kirby earned a master's degree in business administration from Franklin Pierce University in New Hampshire and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Keene State College.

The search committee for the new director of Public Safety included students Aubrianna Wilson '23 and Ciara Carlson-Healy '22, former Chief Diversity Officer and Professor Miguel Fernandez, Director for Custodial and Support Services Missy Beckwith, Dean of Students Derek Doucet, Enterprise Risk Management Outreach Specialist Amber Lovely-Lee, and former Director of Public Safety Lisa Burchard, who now handles special projects.

While considering candidates, Wilson was looking for someone who had a deep understanding of and experience with diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives as well as with mental health and survivor focused support.

"I truly appreciate Demitria's passion for restorative justice and experience with supporting youth as a child protective service worker and supporting survivors as a domestic violence specialist," Wilson said. "Her compassionate leadership approach, awareness of well-being support, and desire to focus on inclusive community needs leads me to be hopeful for the future of reimagining Middlebury's public safety."

Kirby is currently focused on learning more about the department and how it functions on campus.

"I'd also like to spend more time getting to know the college campus and other staff and departments and students and finding out more about how the department [Public Safety] can support them and their goals," Kirby said.

Kirby is excited to spend time in Vermont, which she described as the "most picturesque New England state," and raise her 5-year-old daughter in the community.

COURTESY OF DEMITRIA KIRBY

Kirby is currently focused on learning more about the department and how it functions on camps.

CLUB SPORTS STRUGGLE TO COMPETE WITH LIMITED FUNDS

By RYAN MCELROY
Contributing Writer

Club sports at Middlebury have rapidly increased in popularity among students in recent years, but many of their leaders say that the administration and the Student Government Association (SGA) have not given them the budget necessary to maintain safe and competitive teams.

Student organizations, including club sports, submit an annual budget proposal to the SGA Finance Committee (SGAFC) and then receive some or all of their requested funding in their operating account. Any money spent beyond the SGAFC award must be covered with funds from the club's gift account, a separate pool of money accumulated through organization fundraising and alumni donations, or the club's treasurer will be held personally responsible for any unpaid debt.

For some club teams, the SGAFC budget process did not leave them with adequate funds. Men's ultimate frisbee said that, despite their request this year for a $16,000 budget, SGAFC only provided them with $10,500 this fall. The club crew team said that they were given $33,000 last year instead of their normally approved budget of $45,000. Due to insufficient budget funds, teams like ultimate frisbee, rugby and crew have faced challenges in buying necessary equipment, paying for transportation and attending competitions. Often the lack of funds means that the teams must rely on old equipment, use student-drivers for transportation or even reduce the number of people they can send to competitions.

Covid-19 policies have added to the financial stress, as the school requires club sports to stay in hotel rooms during off-campus travel, but SGAFC policies do not allow student organizations to use their budgets to fund lodging. The SGAFC handbook explains that, "Due to their extensive costs per student, the SGAFC is unable to fund requests for hotels or flights and no allocated funds may be used towards paying for flights or hotels."

Lucie Rochat '22, captain of the Middlebury Sailing Club, said the Student Activities Office (SAO) suggested that the sailing club save money by camping overnight at their regatta. Rochat was disappointed in how the school had disregarded their concerns and forced the hotel expense onto club sports when they had no real way to pay for it.

The club crew team has experienced similar financial obstacles.

"Almost everyone we're racing is a fully funded varsity team," Alden Harring '22, captain of the women's crew team, said.

"You roll up to a regatta, and we've just bleary-eyed gotten off a bus because we couldn't afford hotels. And here's your competition, who rolled out of bed 20 minutes ago with eight hours of sleep. And then it's like, we've already lost," she said.

Middlebury has set up club sports so that they are student-led, but Harring said that it feels like the school often does not value club sports like its other athletic programs and places too much responsibility on students.

The crew captains, according to Harring, are responsible for organizing daily travel to Lake Dunmore for 75 rowers as well as transportation and lodging at regular competitions. They have been forced to reconsider the number of athletes they can send to compete because of funding restrictions.

A recent sports fundraiser, the "I'm Proud to Be a Panther Challenge" — which ended on Oct.14 of this year — raised $403,613 for athletic programs from 1,952 donors and, for the first time, included club sports as donation recipients.

"This is the first year that we've been allowed to participate in it, and it was really, really helpful because we probably raised enough money to cover our expenses for nationals," said Raechel Zeller '22, co-captain of the women's side of The Pranksters, the ultimate frisbee team on campus. The men's and women's ultimate frisbee teams raised a collective $15,700 from the challenge, the most of any club sport. Men's varsity lacrosse raised the most of any group with $48,385, followed by the football program with $44,011.

Leo Sovell-Fernandez '22, co-captain of the men's ultimate frisbee team, said that his primary concern is not the amount of funding allocated by the SGA or in the gift account. He said the Pranksters will likely be able to rely on new money requests and generous alumni this year. Sovell-Fernandez said that the problem for his team is that funding is a barrier to accessing sports medicine and athletic trainers.

"We were told that we needed to have an endowment to fund a trainer and support that additional staff member," Sovell-Fernandez said. "[The administration] gave us a figure of around a million dollars to raise and provide to have our own trainer."

He said one seriously injured player struggles at Middlebury because of the lack of access to a sports medicine professional.

According to Sovell-Fernandez, at a recent competition at Cornell, this player, who was already injured, was able to receive medical care at the university. The team described their player's situation to a Cornell athlete, who offered his student ID and said the Middlebury student could go to the athletic center, swipe in with an ID and get any personalized treatment like any Cornell student.

"And so this player did and got their injury looked at by an in-person person for this first time since leaving home this summer," said Sovell-Fernandez "Which was really frustrating, to show up at a different school and to be able to get access to the resources we needed."

Many club leaders had ideas for the school to change their policies to ensure that club sports become a more safe and accessible activity for students. Isabelle Gorrivan '22, captain of men's crew, said that the team has fundraised by taking shifts at Midd Xpress or delivering papers for The Campus. Earnings from this work go toward financial aid for team members who cannot afford club dues or the annual training trip.

As teams recruit many new members, they face the challenge of including an increasing number of athletes who do not have the ability to pay club dues and buy equipment.

"We all want to help with fundraising because we know that it increases accessibility to the team," said Gorrivan. "But if we have limited coaching staff, limited boats, then we can't get everyone out there. How are you supposed to increase the accessibility if there's a limit as to how many people you can safely have on the water?"

Sovell-Fernandez said that the men's frisbee team had previously requested 45 minutes a week for the club to meet with an athletic trainer, but they have not yet been given any access.

According to Rochat, club sailing cannot meet their needs through fundraising and needs SGAFC to approve their full budget requests if they are to repair their gear and renovate their facilities.

"There's such a frustrating breakdown between what we are capable of and what we are funded to do," Harring said.

Student suffers near-critical medical emergency at Marriott Hotel without support from Public Safety

Continued from Page 1

comparison, Bread Loaf has a front desk person, a night watch person, residential director and student Reslife staff.

Both Ziegler and Fill recall Public Safety officers telling them that, due to the staff shortage, they did not have the resources to go to the Marriott even if policy allowed them. According to the students, the officer on the phone told them that they could call 911 or find someone else with a car.

"The college told us that our resource when I was dying was to call friends on campus," Sipe said.

Due to privacy concerns, Dan Gaiotti, then-interim director of Public Safety, said that he is unable to comment on any specific incident.

He did clarify that officers can go to the Inn on the Green and the Marriot, if they are available. The department has three open positions for officers and two open positions for telecommunications personnel. The Public Safety website lists 10 current officers and five telecommunications personnel.

Despite the staff shortage, "all this time we are able to meet campus service needs," Gaiotti said in an email to The Campus.

Even under normal circumstances, Public Safety officers are sometimes too busy to assist students, even in urgent medical situations. In those instances, students should call 911, he said.

> "The college told us that our resource when I was dying was to call friends on campus."

But when Sipe and her friends first called Public Safety, she was not sure that she needed emergency medical assistance. The restaurant where she ate for dinner had insisted that none of her allergens were in her dish, despite Sipe beginning to exhibit some symptoms of an allergic reaction, including itchy eyes and hives. Though she decided she should go to the emergency room, she was not yet sure that she was going into anaphylactic shock. It seemed to her inappropriate to call 911 at that moment, especially given the steep price tag of an ambulance ride. She felt confident she could rely on campus resources.

By the time she realized she was going into anaphylaxis, her friend was already on the way, and they were speeding towards the hospital. Sipe maintains that, had Public Safety officers taken her to the hospital when she first called, she would not have reached that point.

While Sipe was only visiting the Marriott at the time, Ziegler and Fill both live there and said that the failure of Public Safety to assist Sipe in the midst of what became a medical emergency made them fear for their safety should something similar happen to them.

"I was scared, because what if we had an emergency situation?" Ziegler said. "We didn't know we weren't covered by policy based on a technicality... There wasn't a thing that we sign waving away our rights to use Pub Safe when we moved [to the Marriott]."

Heightening their sense of danger and isolation was the fact that, at the time, there were no clearly-designated ResLife contacts for residents at the Marriott or Inn on the Green.

Until last week, those living at the Marriott and the Inn on the Green were the only students in college housing without a residence director, a Reslife staff member who oversees an area of student housing and acts as a main point of contact and support for housing and living-related concerns. Instead, "the central office team has been acting as the main support for these students," Associate Dean of Student Life AJ Place said in an email to The Campus. After students complained in the wake of the incident, Reslife assigned Katie Burns, who also oversees Bread Loaf, as the residence director.

> "We didn't know we weren't covered by policy based on a technicality... There wasn't a thing that we sign waving away our rights to use Pub Safe when we moved [to the Marriott]."

Both of these off-campus student housing units also lack any student Reslife support staff. The college always planned on hiring community liaisons from amongst the residents, Place said, but the complexity of creating the new positions reportedly caused delays such that they were not advertised until Oct. 22, a week after the incident and after persistent complaints from Sipe's friends. One of the main responsibilities of the community liaisons listed in the advertisement is "health, safety and community management" and help students connect to resources in emergency situations.

Place insisted that the incident had no bearing on the creation and advertisement of these positions.

Sipe spent eight hours recovering in the hospital before returning to campus. A few days after the reaction, Sipe requested and was granted 10 days of medical leave.

Despite her anger at the college's inaction, Sipe said she's "very happy to be alive."

"If I hadn't noticed my hives, I would have fallen asleep, and my friend would have woken up next to a dead body."

A CONVERSATION WITH CAITLIN GOSS, NEWLY APPOINTED VICE PRESIDENT FOR HUMAN RESOURCES

By ALEC GONG
Contributing Writer

Caitlin Goss stepped in as vice president for Human Resources and chief people officer on Sept. 13, after the position had been vacant for eight months since January 2021.

As native of Hinesburg, Vt., Goss has deep roots in the state. At Middlebury, Goss said she can stay close to family and friends from home while also interacting with a diverse community from all over the world.

"Coming to Middlebury was a really compelling idea for me," Goss said.

Though she is only a month and a half into her new position, Goss is already facing a packed schedule as she takes on various jobs within the department. Working with the Human Resources team, she addresses issues such as recruiting, wages and benefits. She also collaborates closely with other senior administrators to ensure that their goals and strategies align.

Goss says that she is looking to create a sense of pride and belonging at Middlebury. In the midst of the ongoing global pandemic and the fight for racial and social justice, Goss has been tasked with helping employees navigate through these challenges.

Goss believes that the best solution is to be a good listener. Goss wishes to co-create a community with members of the college by communicating extensively with faculty and staff, where she invites, amplifies, elevates and builds around different voices. She hopes to integrate the perspectives of all voices, old and new, to combat the challenges that arise.

"I don't like to think I have the answer, but people that work here do," Goss said.

Working with people has always been Goss' passion. After graduating college, she worked for two years as an analyst at Harvard Kennedy School, where she learned about social entrepreneurship and leadership and how an individual or a team can create impact in a government system.

"After two or three years, I started to realize that I loved studying people," Goss said. "And I loved the idea of people being able to drive impact in organizations."

She later spent six years working for Bain and Company, where she started as the lead analyst of global human capital in Boston, and then became the team leader of employee engagement in Shanghai, China. According to Goss, her experience with the leading consulting firm gave her an in-depth knowledge of business, broadened her experience in facilitating team work and built a global perspective that would benefit her throughout her career.

Caitlin eventually chose to go back to school at the University of Vermont's Grossman Business School and found a way to combine both work and passion. At UVM, Goss finished her Master of Business Administration in sustainable innovation, a discipline that she feels satiates all her needs. After graduation, she decided to put her skills to the test by joining Rhino Foods, a Burlington-based cookie dough manufacturer.

"If you asked me if I would ever work at a cookie dough manufacturer, I would have thought that was totally crazy," Goss said.

In the four years she served as director of people and culture at Rhino Foods,, Caitlin spearheaded several programs to create a more diverse and people-oriented workplace as employment doubled.

Outside of work, Goss is passionate about Chinese culture and fluent in Mandarin. She traveled to China on a research trip her freshman summer after studying with a professor at Dickinson College and returned her junior year to study at Beijing University. During her stay, she climbed the Great Wall ten times and even picked up the regional dialect.

"I love riding trains and talking to people, trying to read the newspaper and eating dumplings on the streets," Goss said.

Caitlin's short-term goal as the vice president of Human Resources is to find balance in this fast-paced life.

"So many exciting things are happening at once," Goss said. "It is important that we slow down and also find spaces to be creative."

Outside of her work, she plans to teach her son how to ski this winter.

Middlebury's endowment grows by 37.4 percent

Continued from Page 1

5% and begin making principal payments on the school's debts.

Middlebury was not alone in seeing significant growth this past fiscal year. Williams College saw a 49.9% increase in their endowment, Bowdoin College saw a 57.4% increase in their endowment and Princeton University saw a 46.9% increase in their endowment.

Provost attributed the fiscal success to a number of steps taken by the college. For the endowment, most of the growth comes from investments in private equity; Investure, a firm based in Charlottesville, Va., is responsible for managing Middlebury's assets. For the school budget, federal reimbursements, reductions in overall spending and a hiring freeze were able to offset some of the lost revenue created by the pandemic.

The college has not announced specific plans for the increased endowment but said in the email that they plan on using it to achieve their goal of financial sustainability and to invest in things like financial aid, instructional support and student services support.

"As we look ahead, we must be thoughtful and deliberate about our immediate next steps with respect to these significant and unforeseen gains," Provost said in the announcement. "Given previous years of deficit spending, and higher-than-average endowment spending, we are not making any announcements regarding how we might spend any gains and will instead spend the next year strategizing on a way forward through conversations with our faculty, staff, and student stakeholders, and with our financial advisors and trustees."

At the fall faculty forum, academic discourse flourishes, in-person

By VIRAJ SHANKAR
Contributing Writer

Middlebury College hosted its fourth annual Fall Faculty Forum on Friday, Oct. 29, an event which gave professors and students an opportunity to learn more about projects and initiatives their fellow faculty members have been working on.

In true liberal arts fashion, the subject matter of faculty presentations was wide in scope.

Topics ranged from discussions about democratic versus autocratic tendencies in Muslim-majority countries to lectures about mathematical modeling of neural networks.

The forum provided professors, who are usually focused on teaching classes and conducting research, a chance to explore topics in different academic disciplines than their own. The forum also allowed faculty to share findings from their own discipline with their colleagues and students.

Presentations began with a lecture given by a professor, followed by a panel discussion where audience members could interact with presenters and gain further insight into their research.

Greg Pask, associate professor of biology currently beginning his second year at Middlebury, said that it was fascinating to discover what his colleagues were up to.

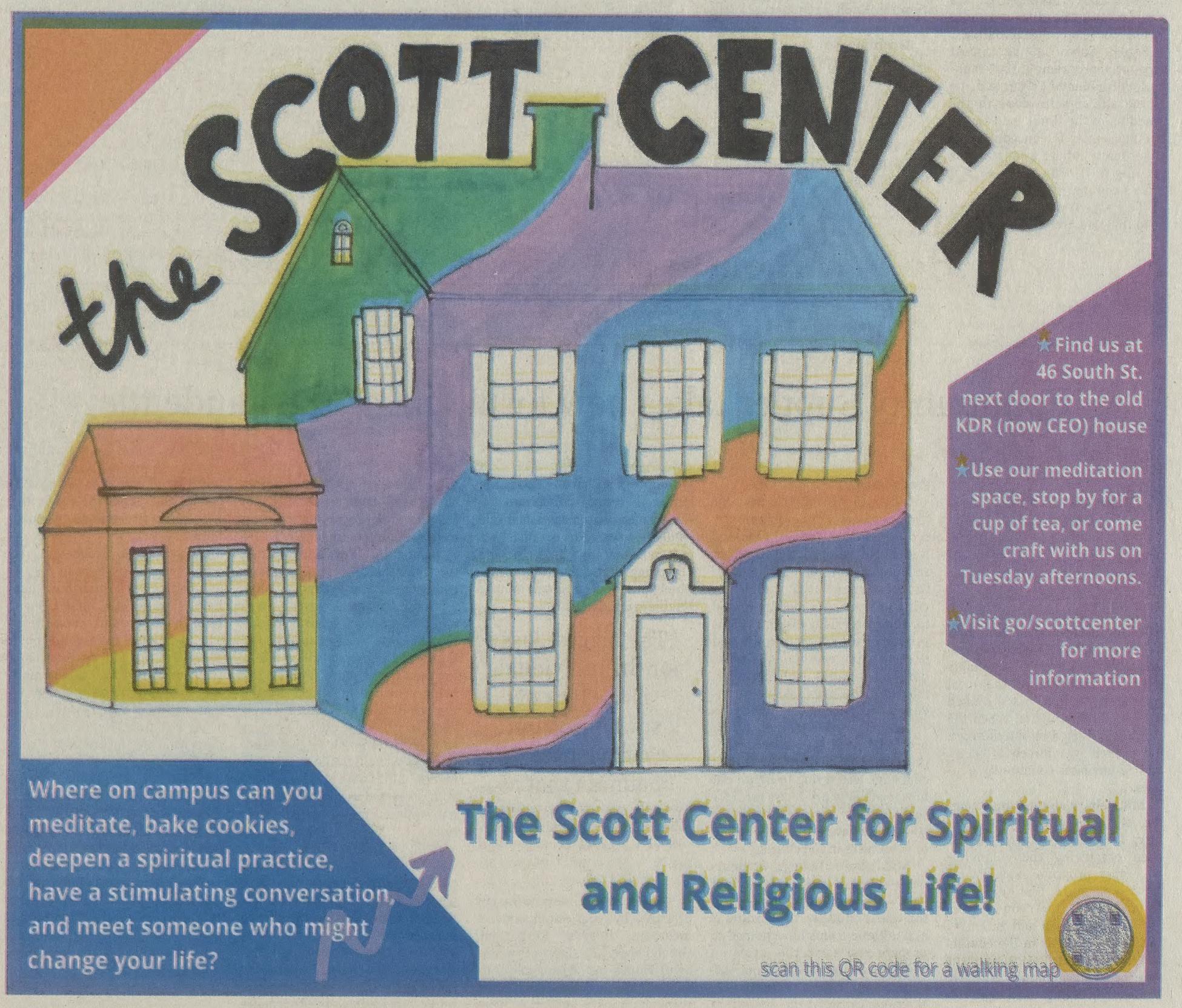
Pask noted that it was exciting to see an increasing level of diversity on display at the forum, noting in particular the "Women Gaining STEAM" panel, which featured topics on an array of scientific disciplines, all led by women.

Other presentations included Assistant Professor of American Studies Ellery Foutch's lecture about how history can be constructed, reconstructed and, potentially, lost.

Foutch's presentation included a history on relic bells and furniture of the mid-1800s designed by Vermonter Henry L. Sheldon. Sheldon made these pieces out of old wood and coins to reflect history, but in the process, also destroyed pieces of history, raising questions about the construction of history.

Reflecting the sentiments of several panelists, Pask emphasized the benefits of the ability to exchange ideas in-person.

"Because of the pandemic this past year, it's been quite hard to keep up with everyone, and this event provided a great opportunity to reconnect with both professors and students," Pask said.


the SCOTT CENTER
Find us at 46 South St. next door to the old KDR (now CEO) house
Use our meditation space, stop by for a cup of tea, or come craft with us on Tuesday afternoons.
Visit go/scottcenter for more information
Where on campus can you meditate, bake cookies, deepen a spiritual practice, have a stimulating conversation, and meet someone who might change your life?
The Scott Center for Spiritual and Religious Life!
scan this QR code for a walking map

Growing food for Addison County: The Knoll's partnership with local nonprofit HOPE

By MAGGIE REYNOLDS
Local Editor

For the past twelve years, The Knoll has been growing produce for a Middlebury-based nonprofit that aims to improve the lives of low-income Addison County residents. Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects, or HOPE, accepts donations from the Knoll and other local farms for their food shelf located at 282 Boardman St. in the town of Middlebury.

According to the 2020 Knoll Food and Garden Educator's Report, the organic garden, "arranged with HOPE to grow a few specific crops to supplement their gleaning efforts that supply the food shelf in Middlebury." Gleaning is defined as harvesting leftover crops from a farmers' field after the commercial harvest. The report stated that "these [2020 crops] totaled almost 1700 pounds of produce distributed to our local community."

Jay Leshinsky, one of the founders of the Knoll and its first farm educator from 2003 to 2017, initially established the partnership between HOPE and the Knoll. He stated that the relationship came about when he and Jeanne Montross, the director of HOPE at the time, were both on the board of the Middlebury Natural Foods Co-Op and frequently discussed HOPE's volunteer gleaning program.

"We saw right away that it was tough with a volunteer program," Leshinky said. "It was hard for HOPE to coordinate the volunteers, so we decided in about 2008 that we would just start growing things for [HOPE] and deliver them." HOPE would have to find volunteers in the local community willing to travel to farms and glean their extra crops.

From there, Leshinsky began conversations with the staff at HOPE about which crops were difficult for the organization to get at specific times of the year and how the Knoll could provide the most helpful crops.

Typically, the HOPE gleaning coordinator would have to find a group of volunteers to go out to an orchard or farm and glean the excess crops. With the assistance of the Knoll's student volunteers, however, HOPE needed to do less gleaning at local farms and could instead focus on other initiatives.

Sophia Calvi '04, the current director of programs at the Franklin Environmental Center and one of the students involved in the founding of the Knoll, said that it is much easier for an educational garden to adjust what they are growing to HOPE's needs than it is for a commercial farm.

"[We asked] what is it that you need that you aren't getting at the food shelf," Calvi said. This resulted in shifting the Knoll's primary crops to butternut squash, green beans, garlic, and onions, she explained.

The partnership developed further in 2009, when Corinne Almquist '09, a then-recent graduate, received the Compton Fellowship for a year-long sustainability project. Almquist was interested in the practice of gleaning and knew there was a gleaning network in northern Vermont called Salvation Farms.

"[I liked the idea of] trying to assist with that effort of making a statewide gleaning network," Almquist said. She knew that Leshinsky had already been bringing extra produce to HOPE, but there was no established gleaning program in place. So, Almquist spent the year of her fellowship developing a network of farmers that would notify her when they had excess crops and a group of volunteers that would pick up or transport the crops.

Once her fellowship was over, Almquist established an intern position to serve her role of coordinating the gleaning and transportation efforts. "It became such a hit at HOPE that they really wanted to be able to continue that project after I left after the year," Almquist said.

Isabela Bahadorzadeh '23 was an intern with HOPE in the summer of 2021, after she completed an internship with the Knoll during the 2020–21 school year. She said the eight-week summer internship included connecting with farmers who frequently donate, as well as coordinating the pick-up of already leftover produce. She also worked routinely on distributing food from HOPE to local community partners, such as the Open Door Clinic, the Bristol School System summer meals program, the Mary Johnson Preschool farmers' market and some retirement homes.

"A lot of people fall through the cracks, and HOPE tries to patch that up with community partnerships," Bahadorzadeh said. "[Vermont is] kind of a perfect size for what HOPE is trying to do. It feels like it's on a scale that is small but also so far-reaching."

Bahadorzadeh said that, looking ahead to the winter, HOPE will be shifting its focus to assembling holiday boxes for Thanksgiving and the December holidays. Many of those boxes will be made possible by frozen squash from the Knoll's summer and fall donations.

According to Leshinsky, the partnership between HOPE and the Knoll provides a great opportunity for students to learn in the garden and for the college to help a local nonprofit's goals of addressing hunger and poverty. Leshinsky added that "it's all about learning, and vegetables are just the tools."

COURTSEY OF ISABELA BAHADORZADEH '23

Weekly glean at Footprint Farm in Starksboro.

Totals By Crop

Total Pounds: 1,696

Crop	Pounds
Beans	12
Beet Greens/Chard	35
Carrots	61
Garlic/Garlic Scapes	39
Kale	8
Mixed Roots	40
Onions	212
Potatoes	103
Winter Squash	1,186
Total	1,696

Totals By Item

Item	Amount
Plants/Starts	40 individual

This report was generated by The Vermont Gleaning Collective on December 17th 2020

Produce donated by the Knoll to HOPE during the 2019-2020 growing season.

Community Supper takes new form during the pandemic

By MANYA KULA
Staff Writer

For the last 17 years, community supper at the Middlebury Congregational Church has reliably provided members of the local community with a home-cooked meal on Friday nights. When the pandemic started in March 2020, the church was forced to pause and re-envision community suppers.

Middlebury alumna and member of the Middlebury community, Dottie Neuberger '58, has been organizing the community supper program since its inception in 2004. She enjoys the connectedness that comes from providing the food and gathering for sit-down meals in the church, but the pandemic has changed the way the local community is able to connect, bringing challenges for the program.

When the pandemic first hit and members of the community could no longer gather in person, Neuberger reached out to local school nurses to identify families in the community that would benefit from having a meal prepared for them on Friday evenings. This version of the program continued to serve a limited number of walk-ups and families, and delivered meals to the Commons, a restricted income housing community.

Neuberger described the initial problems with this altered program, explaining that, "the biggest challenge was trying to figure out how to actually produce a meal for that number of people when we could only have a limited number of volunteers in the church."

Middlebury College students have always been an important part of community suppers. In the past, student organizations and athletic teams have helped to prepare and serve the meals on Friday evenings, and without students being able to volunteer in the same capacity, the operations of the program have been further hindered. Since the college resumed in-person classes last fall, students have been coming back in smaller groups to help with packaging and delivering meals, which has been a great help to Neuberger and her team.

> The biggest loss for the individuals is the lack of sociability, but we have tried to maintain that as much as we possibly could.

The meals are now primarily prepared by local establishments including Rosie's Restaurant, Green Peppers Restaurant and the Swift House Inn. The community supper program also has a grant through January 2022 that helps them partner with restaurants who themselves partnered with farmers to get local food to community members in need.

In the last year and a half, the community supper program has been able to expand to serve around 280 meals every week and deliver to a family population of 160. Neuberger reported that fewer individuals are coming for meals, but more families are being provided meals than when the meals were sit-down, likely because it is difficult for families to coordinate going to community supper. Being able to provide more families with meals has been an unexpected upshot of the challenges posed by Covid-19 restrictions.

Still, Neuberger expressed a wish to return to Community Suppers. "When we can get back to it, we would certainly like to be able to offer a meal inside the church because part of the benefit of the suppers was the sociability of it," she said. "The biggest loss for the individuals is the lack of sociability, but we have tried to maintain that as much as we possibly could." She hopes the connectedness of the program has been retained.

According to Neuberger, the drivers who deliver meals, as well as volunteers who distribute them, have significantly helped maintain the important connections. The existence of several porch chairs by the pickup location at the church have also helped maintain connection and the more social aspects of the program.

At this time, Neuberger is unsure what the future of the community supper program will look like. She would like to continue to serve this increased number of families but also hopes to return to sit-down meals. These dual interests mean that future community suppers may be a hybrid between the old model and the current one, showing the value of the program and its traditions as well as its adaptability and still relevant vitality to the local community.

ALLEGATIONS OF WAGE THEFT AND LABOR MISCONDUCT PERSIST AT COLLEGE-PARTNERED DAIRY FARM

Continued from Page 1

"When I managed to open the door, we both tried getting out," Luna said. "But then the manager came rushing and running and then started to physically push us outside of the parlor. I got pushed forcefully out of the barn, and then José was next. They pushed him really hard, he came flying out of the door and he almost landed on the floor."

Luna says that the two men tried to tell Goodrich Gingras that they wanted to have a peaceful conversation about the wages, but she threatened to call the police. Ramos got nervous at the possibility of law enforcement arriving, and the two men left.

Citing the traumatic nature of the event, Ramos declined The Campus' request for an interview.

Chase Goodrich, who co-owns the farm with his sister Danielle Goodrich Gingras, declined to comment and instructed The Campus not to contact any other members of the farm.

On Feb. 29, 2020, following Luna and Ramos' experience at the farm, Migrant Justice coordinated direct action on the farm with the goal of acquiring the withheld paycheck. The crowd of around 60 — including around 20 college students — was confronted by employees of the farm. On the day of the protests, signs displaying anti-immigrant language were positioned on the side of the road.

Thelma Gomez, an organizer for Migrant Justice, remembers a tense atmosphere, with members of the Goodrich family yelling at and threatening protestors.

Asa Skinder '22.5, who was at the protest said members of the Goodrich family would walk to the edge of the farm's driveway to accost protestors where they were picketing in front of the farm. Skinder also claims that farm vehicles exited and entered the farm without concern for the protestors in their way.

"I remember I had to jump backwards into a ditch with some other people because there was a massive farm truck," Skinder said in an interview with The Campus. "It was pulling out [of the farm] not fast, just not trying to go around the people that were there. It was definitely a really intense scene."

"My daughters were crying because [Danielle] was yelling at me and some people who were with the girls," Gomez continued in Spanish remarks translated by The Campus. "They were super aggressive."

As the situation escalated, Olivia Pintair '22.5, who was attending the protest and who had previously worked with Migrant Justice, said that she ushered Gomez's children into a parked car on the side of the road. "We were just sitting in the car on the side of the road, and this man from the farm had come up to us and screamed 'f****** trespassing,'" she said.

"I think it was just really powerful to see this experience through kids' eyes," Pintair continued. "It was just pure emotion ... Just to see the way that these farmers — who were so angry that we were there and didn't believe that José deserved his wages — were just making kids cry."

As the situation escalated, someone called the police. Addison County sheriffs then arrived, and Ramos eventually left without his paycheck.

After the protest, Ramos, with the help of Migrant Justice, filed a Vermont Department of Labor complaint alleging that Goodrich stole his last week's wages. The Campus filed a Public Records Request for Ramos's wage complaint with the Vermont Department of Labor. Due to 21 VSA 345a(h) which states that "information obtained from any employer, employee, or witness in the course of investigating a complaint of unpaid wages shall be confidential," The Campus' request was denied. A subsequent appeal by The Campus was also denied.

"It was definitely unfortunate, and I don't think we handled ourselves well," Chase Goodrich said about the incident when interviewed by VTDigger this past summer. "The only thing I can say is that that really does not speak to who we are. We care about our animals. We care about our people. We are family-first."

Migrant Justice and Goodrich both confirmed that Ramos has since received his $600 paycheck.

Shortly after Chase Goodrich declined to comment on this story, Amanda Reinhardt, director of student activities at Middlebury, emailed the Campus' Editor in Chief Riley Board, asking for Board to meet off-the-record with Erin Goodrich, Chase Goodrich's wife, who also works in the Student Activities Office. As a student organization, The Campus is overseen by the Student Activities Office. This request was later retracted after Board suggested it might constitute a conflict of interest.

Both Erin Goodrich and Reinhardt declined to comment on the exchange.

After the February 2020 protest at Goodrich, five Middlebury students penned an op-ed in The Campus calling for the college to reconsider its partnership with Goodrich.

"I am very disappointed by how the college has handled the labor and human rights abuses at Goodrich Farm, but not surprised." Jaden Hill '22, one of the signatories of the op-ed, said in an email to The Campus. "The school has an incredible amount of power, especially financial power. We see this in their relationship with Goodrich Farm, both materially and symbolically."

"The college probably should have known, most farms use migrant labor, and they should have looked into it," Emma Ramirez-Richer '22, a member of the college's Environmental Council, said. "It would be naive of them to think that everything would be just perfect."

Provost was not aware if the college had conducted any due diligence of their own.

When asked if the college had done any other investigation into working conditions at Goodrich prior to development of the plant, Provost clarified that the college has built a relationship with the Goodrich Family Farm over the last decade.

"We had people on the ground. Specifically doing an analysis on fair labor practices? I can't speak to that," Provost said. He said that there was no specific task list for this pursuit, but rather a general goal of assessing whether Goodrich was a "good partner."

Jack Byrne, the college's director of sustainability integration, said that Vanguard was the primary contact with Goodrich for the purpose of due diligence, and cited Vanguard experience working with 130 farms. "As [Vanguard] have put it, the Goodrich Farm passed their due diligence admirably," Byrne said.

Byrne elaborated that, because the college has a contract to buy the natural gas through Vanguard, they are relying on Vanguard's due diligence practices.

"For every farm that we work with, we go back through the labor records and we actually meet with the regulators in the state," John Hansel- man, founder and Chief Strategy Officer of Vanguard Renewables, said in an interview with The Campus. "To the best of my recollection, there were literally no prior incidents before Mr. Ramos made his allegations."

Hanselman noted that farm labor is heavily monitored in Vermont, leading to confidence in the Department of Labor's assessment. He also described other labor standards that Vanguard looked into, including comparisons of farmworker pay.

"The other thing that was intriguing to us was to compare and contrast the salaries of the farm workers versus some of the salaries of the college workers," Hanselman said. "They get paid well on the farm."

Hanselman views his relationship with the Goodriches in a positive light. "We see the Goodriches as really good stewards of the land, and I think very good employers of labor," he said. "We're on the farm, every day. We have people working on the farm. I've spent countless days on the farm. I've never seen or heard anything that wouldn't be exactly what we would want in a partner in terms of the way they work with their staff and employees."

Provost says that the college has been in touch with the Goodriches following Ramos' complaint and the ensuing protest.

"We felt very good about our evaluation and our conversations with them about their practices and their employee satisfaction of their workers, and concluded that they remain a good partner," he said.

After Ramos' complaint, the college did not speak with any workers or former workers at Goodrich Farm, according to Byrne.

"I don't think that would have been appropriate for us to do, they're their employees," he said.

According to Jaden Hill and Olivia Pintair — two of the co-signatories of the op-ed — after the piece was published, its authors had a conference call with Byrne to discuss its contents. In a follow-up call with Byrne, Madeline Sharrow, a founding member of Migrant Justice, sought to open conversations with the college to discuss assisting the school in implementing fair labor practices formulated by Milk With Dignity at dairy farms the college is partnered with.

Milk With Dignity is Migrant Justice's hallmark campaign, advocating for the enactment of a set of regulations to standardize living and working conditions for workers on dairy farms across Vermont. Ben & Jerry's signed with Milk With Dignity in 2017, and the program covers 20% of Vermont's dairy production.

"[Migrant Justice] shared their Milk With Dignity program, which is their main campaign," Byrne confirmed. "I reviewed the program, and I appreciate the goals. I think the goals are good."

But Byrne said he does not think it is appropriate for the college to pressure Goodrich to join the program, equating doing so with "tell[ing] them how to run their business."

"[We're] trying to get a better understanding of where there may be opportunities for the college and even this partnership to be able to help support [migrant farmworkers]," Byrne said. "It's just not the single solution of Milk With Dignity that we think is the answer."

As a result of the call between the student activists and Byrne, in fall 2020, a subcommittee of the Environmental Council was tasked with developing "a social justice and equity framework for Energy2028 implementation and Climate Action Capacity Project Collaboration." In May 2021, the subcommittee described the college's partnership with Goodrich Farm as one that needed to be reassessed and realigned "to more ethical standards."

After the recommendations, interns worked on the framework over the summer and passed the work along to a steering committee that hopes to publish a draft of the recommendation in early 2022.

Byrne noted that student activism around the project has spurred his interest in learning more about Vermont's migrant workforce and referenced a 2021 study written by University of Vermont Professor Bindu Panikkar and graduate Mary-Kate Barrett in which they partnered with Migrant Justice to survey the state of occupational health experiences of migrant dairy workers in Vermont. The paper concluded that wage theft is a concern for many workers and that many dairy workplaces provide inadequate health and safety measures.

According to Provost, Goodrich farm was chosen for the biodigester project because of its size within the Vermont dairy industry.

"It couldn't be any local dairy farm. It had to be one that was fairly large," Provost said. The Goodrich Farm is home to over 900 milking cows; by comparison, in 2019, the average number of cows per dairy farm in Vermont was 185. "For decades we've been dealing with failing Vermont dairy farms, so it was really in the spirit of: how could we help struggling dairy farms by finding alternative sources of use of their farms," he said.

The college buys 55% of the 'renewable natural gas' (RNG) produced by the digester through Vermont Gas Systems (VGS), the state utility. Annually, the college will purchase 100 million cubic feet of RNG from the plant.

Provost stated that the college would not disclose the rate paid per cubic foot of RNG, but did note that the college is paying a premium for the fuel. Provost also noted that Middlebury's early adoption of renewable energy goals have placed the college in a seller's position in the renewable energy credit market.

The college will sell the gas credit through Bluesource, an emissions credits broker which will most likely sell to entities in California looking to satisfy the state's cap-and-trade laws. Under these laws, entities who do not satisfy California's greenhouse gas reduction standards may purchase credits for renewable energy to meet requirements.

Moser clarified that the market the college would be participating in is the Renewable Identification Numbers (RINs) market. In this market, Bluesource would find a buyer for the college's RINs, which are attributed to the RNG the college purchases from Goodrich Farm. Bluesource would then sell these RINs to entities looking to meet compliance requirements in their localities.

The college has not sold any credits yet, and, according to Provost, Bluesource is identifying potential buyers.

OTHER ALLEGATIONS

When Ramos spoke to Migrant Justice organizers in February 2020, he alleged a laundry list of abuses occurring at the farm. He claimed that managers paid him less than the minimum wage and subtracted repair costs for broken equipment from workers' paychecks. Ramos also alleged that Danielle Goodrich Gingras was often verbally aggressive towards workers, and that worker accommodations were decrepit.

Allegations of inappropriate labor treatment are not recent developments. Another migrant worker interviewed by The Campus who worked at Goodrich Farm a decade ago has also alleged wage theft and labor abuses. In May 2021, he filed a Vermont Department of Labor complaint alleging that the farm withheld his wages.

Heberto De La Cruz Perez worked at the Goodrich Farm from November 2010 until sometime in 2011, when he fled the farm in the middle of the night after management told him that he and another worker would be responsible for paying for a $10,000 batch of spoiled milk. When he was working at the farm, De La Cruz Perez was using a different name.

De La Cruz Perez claims that during a shift he worked, a pregnant cow got in with other cows and was milked. Cows' milk in the last four months of their pregnancy cannot be consumed by humans, so this mix up spoiled the whole tank.

De La Cruz Perez alleges that the farm threatened to take $10,000 from the paychecks of him and the other worker for the lost value of the spoiled tank.

"We left because to pay $10,000 we would have had to work two or three months for them perhaps," De La Cruz Perez said."So the both of us left and we never returned."

While this event was the reason for his departure from the farm, De La Cruz Perez's wage complaint pertains to a different event. De La Cruz Perez said he worked 3 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. six days a week. One early morning, De La Cruz Perez crashed a skid steer into a gate on the farm and broke the gate. He alleges that in retaliation, the farm withheld his paycheck and that he did not receive any payment for the week.

After seeing Ramos' complaint and protest, De La Cruz Perez felt motivated to also file a Department of Labor complaint, which he says he did in May of 2021 with the help of Migrant Justice.

"We didn't have anyone to defend us. They did what they wanted and the only thing I could do was leave to not pay all of that money," De La Cruz Perez said. "And when I saw [José's case], I didn't want anything by telling it, I just wanted the people to know what type of people they were and so that they also don't forget all they did."

Neither college employees Byrne and Provost, nor Hanselman, the Vanguard founder, said they were aware of De La Cruz Perez's complaint.

"What we understand is there was one worker who was unhappy about his termination conditions, not his actual employment conditions," Hanselman said. "[Ramos] didn't like the way he was fired for non-performance."

"It's not surprising that over the course of the hundreds of employees that have been there, through the generations of ownership, there might be one unhappy worker upon his termination," Hanselman said. "That's probably not disturbing or shocking to us."

Hanselman said that if they were made aware of any new issues with labor on the farm, they would look into them.

LOOKING FORWARD

Still, activists, students and former workers want the college to reconsider its partnership with the farm.

"We take so many moral stances at this college, and so many of them aren't backed up," said Ramirez-Richer, a student involved with the college's Environmental Council. "I feel like that's a pretty easy one. It's right here in our community, in our neighborhood."

"They're not free from human rights abuses. They cannot say that they have nothing to do with that," Luna continued. "They are also responsible for that. It is, in a way, their supply chain."

Provost addressed the college's role in the gas' supply chain in relation to Energy2028.

"One of our struggles with Energy2028 is that we can do all these things about our sources of energy and our renewable efforts, our consumption of energy, but there's so many components of it... that I can't control," Provost said. "So it's, 'What is the role of the college? And what is the role of us as individuals?'"

In an email to The Campus, Hill, one of the signatories of the op-ed, noted the tension between such praise for a new energy source and working conditions on the farm. "We are being celebrated, but all I see is privilege, complicity and a very dangerous precedent as we think about sustainability and safe, healthy human communities for the future. Listen to what many have asked for: introduce labor standards into your contract with Goodrich Farm to protect the rights of farmworkers, without whom this 'renewable' energy would not exist."

Byrne said that the college's pivot to sourcing local energy brought the realities of energy production closer to home. "When we were buying two million gallons of #6 fuel oil from the global fuel supply chain, we had no real sense of what it was attached to," he said.

Pintair noted that the biodigester represents a large financial investment and partnership on behalf of the college. "I know there's a lot of money tied up in this project... It seems, based on our conversations with Jack [Byrne] and based on what's happening and what's not happening, that the relationships between those powers are prioritized ahead of the ethics of what's actually happening."

De La Cruz Perez emphasized that his mistreatment at Goodrich was not an isolated incident.

"The truth is, in this world I don't like to say anything bad or anything or wish bad upon anyone... I wasn't the only one this happened to," De La Cruz Perez said.

"They tried to cover the sun with their finger, as we say," he continued. "But we really know what they're like."

Staff Writer Ariadne Will contributed reporting to this article.

Editor At Large Sophia McDermott-Hughes contributed translation to this article. The VTDigger article "The Northeast's largest renewable natural gas digester begins operations in Salisbury," which is cited multiple times in this article, was reported and written by McDermott-Hughes.

THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Riley Board *
MANAGING EDITORS
Lucy Townend *
Abigail Chang *
EDITORIAL BOARD DIRECTOR
Lily Laesch *
DIGITAL DIRECTOR
Emmanuel Tamrat *
EDITORS AT LARGE
Ideal Dowling *
Jake Gaughan
Charlie Keohane
Sophia McDermott-Hughes *
NEWS DESK
Tony Sjodin * †
Brinlea La Barge
Catherine McLaughlin *
Roya Touran
LOCAL DESK
Becca Amen * †
*Julia Pepper**
Maggie Reynolds *
Jack Summersby
Florence Wu
OPINIONS DESK
Porter Bowman * †
Maggie Connolly *
Constance Gooding *
Sarah Miller *
Daleelah Saleh *
Tejas Srinivasan *
ARTS & CULTURE DESK
Owen Mason-Hill * †
Summer Hornbostel *
Rain Ji *
Acadia Klepeis *
Olivia Mueller *
SPORTS DESK
Blaise Siefer * †
Sam Lipin *
Isabella Marcus
DESIGN DIRECTOR
Olivia Kilborn
PHOTO EDITORS
Shirley Mao †
Charlie Deichman-Caswell *
VISUALS EDITORS
*Sabrina Templeton** †
Pia Contreras
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
Estelle Martin
LAYOUT EDITORS
Emily Hogan
Shamail Naseer
ONLINE EDITORS
Mihir Singh
Lily Jones
Eric Burchill
COPY EDITORS
Maya Heikkenin
Leander Ruhl
Claire Shapiro
BUSINESS MANAGER
Genny Gottdeiner

** Member of Editorial Board*
† Senior Editor

The Campus reserves the right to deny publication of all or part of a submission for any reason. This includes, but is not limited to: the making of assertions based on hearsay; the relation of private conversations; the libelous mention of unverifiable events; the use of vulgar language or personal attacks; unwarranted requests for anonymity.

More information about the paper and its submission policies can be found online at www.middleburycampus.com.

The opinions expressed by contributors to the Opinions section, as well as reviews, columns, editorial comics and other commentary, are views of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the newspaper. The Campus welcomes letters to the editor at 250 words or less, or opinions submissions at 800 words or less.

@middleburycampus

@middcampus

The Middlebury Campus

We demand sufficient care now

editorial

The editorial represents the opinion of the Middlebury Campus editorial board.

Content Warning: This article contains mentions of suicide.

Among students, it is common knowledge that Middlebury's mental health resources fall short in a myriad of ways. The counseling office has long remained understaffed and overbooked, leading students and even professors to suggest that students would be better off searching in Burlington for services or not bothering at all. Members of the board who have also served as orientation leaders noted that they err on the side of honesty with their new students, expressing that mental health support on campus is inadequate at best and devastatingly lacking at worst.

As a board, this is not the first time we have editorialized on mental health, and we know it will not be the last. Our community has been calling for more robust mental health infrastructure for years, yet the college is still falling short. While college administrators may be well-intentioned, ultimately, mental health resources remain inadequate — and we haven't seen a significant push to change that reality.

Vermont, as we know, is a rural healthcare desert. The college needs to provide access to every element of healthcare a student could possibly need and more — because we can't simply step off campus and reach the type of resources available in a metropolitan area. As a result, we have chosen to use this editorial to outline the specific, tangible action items that we know the college has the ability to implement.

1. Prioritize in-person counseling appointments.

In a semester when essentially everything is being held in person, it's troubling to us that counseling sessions are not. If the college feels comfortable cramming thirty students in a Monroe classroom, then they should most definitely be able to sign off on a one-on-one appointment in which a student and counselor could sit more than six feet apart. Counseling sessions that take place over Zoom lack intimacy, make it difficult for providers to read patients' body language and are contingent upon students finding a private space to attend from. Telehealth is likewise not a tenable option. Students can only get a limited number of free sessions, and appointments are with outsourced practitioners who have no knowledge of what it's like to be a Middlebury student, and require more "getting to know you" than getting help.

2. Hire (at least one) in-house psychiatrist.

Though students have access to external psychiatric providers at the local Counseling Service of Addison County (CSAC), getting an appointment still takes time and self-advocacy. One editor mentioned in our meeting that they were told they would get an appointment ASAP — it's now been more than a month. Even as we note the difficulty of accessing off-campus resources, we acknowledge that reliance on CSAC and similar entities puts a further strain on resources in the local community, which also serve full-time state residents. The college should be able to provide the infrastructure for everything from mild anxiety to emergency scenarios, including having a psychiatrist on staff. Middlebury must begin laying the foundation for support systems that supply the full spectrum of care.

3. Abolish mandatory leave policies.

The last thing a student should have to weigh when considering emergency care is the loss of a year at Middlebury. If a student has to take time off to seek in-patient mental health care, they can be barred from completing the semester at hand, as well as prohibited from returning until the following academic year, at which point the college, not the student, makes the ultimate decision regarding if they are ready for re-enrollment, according to a 2019 op-ed describing this experience. It's beyond troubling to think about how many Middlebury students — both current and past — have sacrificed their long-term well-being in order to maintain their enrollment status.

Forcing students to take mandatory leave can also send them into an unstable home situation that could very well exacerbate the problems at hand. Such dilemmas are made even more complicated for international students, who could stand to lose their visas if they are required to depart Middlebury. Furthermore, students are also only guaranteed eight semesters of financial aid, so an unforeseen absence from the college can jeopardize the aid they receive from Middlebury.

4. Replace short-term crisis care with an approach that centers long-term, sustainable support.

Middlebury's services are, in short, not designed to foster long term relationships between students and mental health professionals. The mental health resources are so fraught to deal with — from same-day scheduling to short, 25-minute appointment times — that students tend to only seek out help when things have come to a head. Rather, we should envision a mental health system that promotes preventative, not reactive care, so that students can receive ongoing, consistent support before they reach crisis-levels of need.

Counseling advertises their services as short-term, and editors spoke about the scarcity of therapists in the area who are accepting new patients, leaving students unsure of how to find long-term, sustained mental health care. The shortfalls inherent in the current systems leave students contemplating their own deservingness; as one editor noted, after dissatisfaction with the college's counseling options, she was hesitant to seek a local therapist after learning that CSAC has a long waitlist, because she didn't want to take an appointment from someone who needed it more. The system also favors students who are prepared to self-advocate — students who declare that: no, they cannot meet for just 25 minutes for a same-day appointment, and no, they cannot wait more than a week for a follow-up appointment. The onus should not be all on students. One way to alleviate the pressure of self reporting could be to provide comprehensive training to faculty and deans regarding how to interpret the warning signs of a student who needs mental health support.

5. Lay the foundation for mental health resources starting at orientation.

Middlebury students, on arrival, are provided with first year counselors, a residence director, their student life dean, their first-year seminar advisor and their Compass mentor. We know who to talk to when we're having trouble deciding what classes to take, contemplating what major to pursue or having a dispute with our roommate. But when mental health crises arise, students must begin the process of doing their own research to figure out how to get help, and largely rely on each other via word of mouth to find out what offerings are available, leading to inconsistencies in students' knowledge of what resources exist. This could be alleviated by providing all incoming students with an assigned counselor who they can forge a relationship with (or choose not to!) during their time here.

6. Acknowledge and rectify barriers for marginalized students.

Students of color living and learning in a predominantly white institution are already likely to experience compounded mental health issues as a result of experiencing imposter syndrome, micro- and macro-aggressions and racial stereotyping, to name just a few things. Many students also hail from backgrounds where mental health is stigmatized, which creates additional barriers when it comes to giving oneself permission to seek help. Approaching these differences of identity and experience from a place of sensitivity and equity necessitates providing students with counselors with a wide variety of identities, including BIPOC and queer-identifying counselors.

7. Do whatever it takes.

We get it — convincing dozens of mental health practitioners to move to rural Vermont might not be the easiest sell. But now, more than ever, we're ready to state that these provisions are not optional, and the college should pay as much as is necessary to fully staff mental health resources. As was asserted in an email sent to the college community last week, our endowment grew half a billion dollars last year. And though we don't know the details of how these funds are earmarked and restricted, we do know that the college can no longer state that it is in a financially precarious position. The college also has enormous fundraising power outside the endowment, but directing such campaigns toward mental health would mean admitting that resources are currently insufficient.

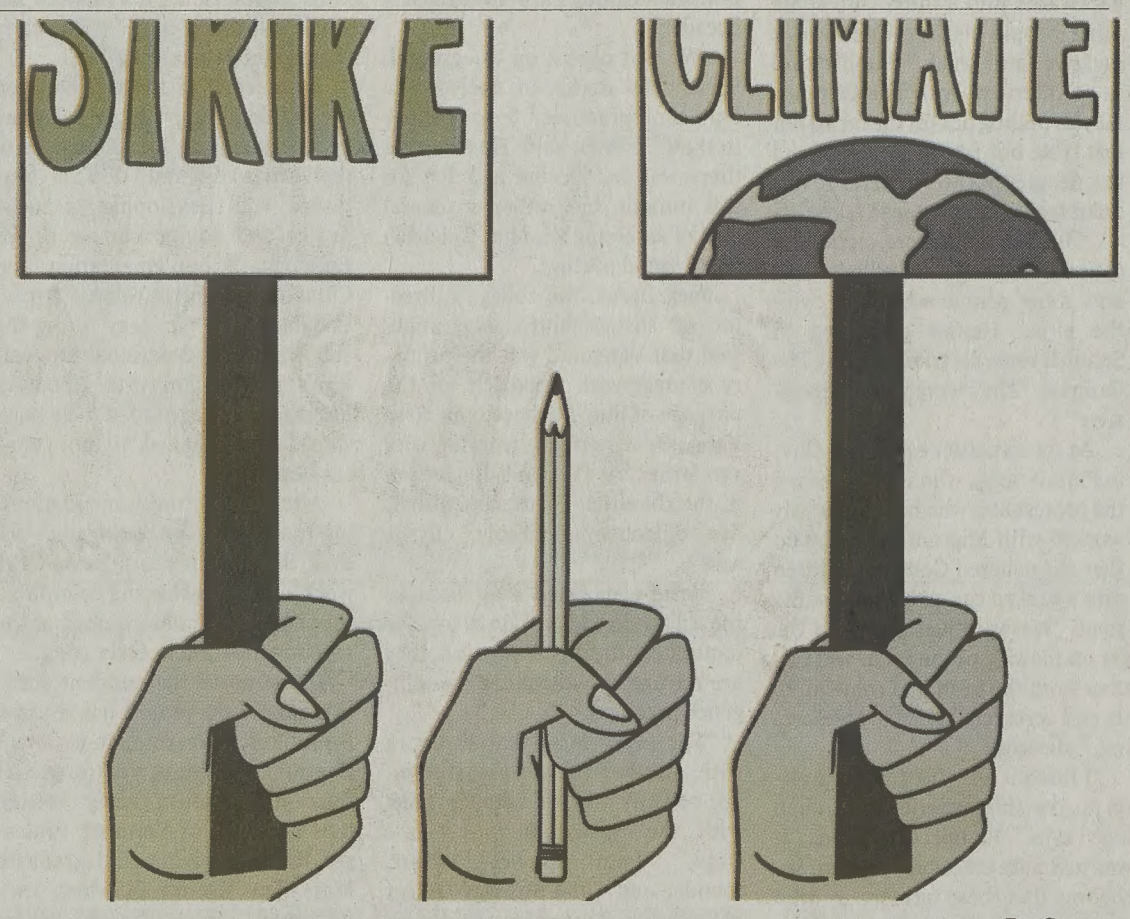
For counselors employed now, we can't imagine that their current working conditions are particularly ideal either. In our experience as students, those working in counseling services are dedicated and supportive individuals who do truly want to help students in whatever way they can. However, they remain constrained by the lack of resources provided to them by the college.

We won't pretend that we have all the answers, but we do know that these steps will provide support that students direly need. We hope above all else that the college will listen to us, and take responsibility for the health of students. To put it plainly — student mental health is a matter of life or death. It's far past time to pull out all the stops.

Writing and striking from the precipice of the climate crisis

Op-Ed

***Emily Thompson** is a member of the class of 2023.*



PIA CONTRERAS

Content Warning: This op-ed contains mentions of a hunger strike.

It is time that I wrote. I've pushed it off for years, then dabbled, pushed, and dabbled. Writing was different from activism. It felt frivolous and assuming, yet as familiar as my own skin. Perhaps that quote about our greatest fear not being our own inadequacy but our true potential is true.

Organizing, on the other hand, did not come naturally to me. Organizing means talking to people, asking them to do things for you, and as a woman, it's safe to say I have a severe aversion to "making the hard ask," which means asking people what they want and then asking them if they are willing to take the necessary steps to achieve that. Despite this, I started organizing for climate justice three years ago and can't help but keep coming back.

From October 20 to November 2, five young organizers with the Sunrise Movement held a hunger strike in Washington, DC. Their demand was for President Joe Biden to whip Senators Joe Manchin (WV) and Kyrsten Sinema (AZ) into passing the Build Back Better Act before passing the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework. If you are a human, this is an important and historical occasion for you, so listen up.

Five young adults — Abby, Kidus, Ema, Julie and Paul — risked their health and their lives. At the moment I'm writing this, they haven't eaten in 14 days. Their bodies are consuming their muscles for energy to keep their organs functioning. This is dark stuff — abyss stuff — but I beg you to not turn away if you can help it.

These incredible individuals are making this sacrifice, making their pain visible for the nation to see to advocate for passing the Build Back Better Act. The Act would allocate $550 billion dollars to stopping the climate crisis and would employ 300,000 people in good-paying green jobs. It would provide grants for environmental justice groups, reduce pollution in ports and majority-BIPOC communities, restore coastlines, fund clean transit — I could go on.

This bill is a step toward a future where our generation chooses to have kids because we know they'll be safe, that they'll have access to clean water, air and food, and that we can have good-paying jobs in communities. Frontline and marginalized communities don't have to be sacrificial for the benefit of the white, wealthy elite who have been profiting from cuts in public spending for the past 50 years. Abby, Kidus, Ema, Paul and Julie are making that sacrifice for us now, so we can dream of farming jobs in regenerative agriculture, tech jobs in the clean energy industry, and access to the unpolluted outdoors, instead of fearing the rising sea levels, encroaching wildfires, and increasing food prices that will hurt poor, working class and BIPOC-majority communities first.

This is our shot. This bill has been in the works since Biden stepped into the Oval Office. If we don't pass something that will materially benefit people in this country from all walks of life, Democrats could lose Congress in 2022, and then we are back at square one with the 2030 deadline to decarbonize our economy encroaching on our doorsteps. This act is our future, our health and our safety from climate catastrophe.

Writing is my organizing, my vocation that will support this movement. It is where I feel most powerful, and I have to say, writing this has brought me sheer joy. This op-ed is my seed I'm planting in your brains. I dare to ask the question: What is your vocation? What is the thing you can do while the strikers starve and I write? Maybe it is organizing — talking to your peers, planning protests. Maybe it's trainings or music or community work. All I ask is that you stay with me on the edge of the abyss and the future. Dare with me to believe that the two are different things — that if you pick up the phone or the pen or the violin, you can plant your own seed. Are you afraid that you are inadequate? Or are you afraid that you are powerful beyond measure?

Not all of us can go on hunger strike, but I ask you, what can you do? Can you call Senators Manchin and Sinema? Can you tweet, have your friends make calls, write an op-ed in your hometown paper, come to a Sunrise Middlebury meeting? This is a moment of history. This is the time, if there ever was one, to make that final push, to ask yourself what you are capable of and willing to do. Anything can be the seed from which our livable future grows.

Silence is deadly

Why we need to talk about suicide

Notes from the Desk

Sophia McDermott-Hughes '23 is an Editor at Large for The Middlebury Campus

Content Warning: This op-ed contains mentions of suicide.

It is terrifying to wake up one day wishing you were dead.

That fear consumed me earlier this semester. I later discovered my suicidal ideation — the wish to be dead, but not necessarily to kill yourself — was a side effect of an antidepressant I had begun taking. I am off that medication and doing much better now. But the couple of weeks during which I cried myself to sleep nightly hoping I would not wake up the next morning continue to haunt me, especially in the wake of Yan's death by suicide.

I am not alone in feeling particularly raw these last few weeks; many other students here have experience with suicidal thoughts and ideation or continue to experience them. Others have lost loved ones to suicide or gone through traumatic periods trying to support loved ones through their own mental health struggles.

The reality is that we are living in a dangerous age and a dangerous place. According to the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, "Suicide is the leading cause of death among college and university students." Yet, even after losing one of our own to suicide, why does it seem like no one is talking about it?

Every time I have mentioned my own experiences and trauma with suicidal thoughts in the wake of Yan's death, my peers have responded in kind. I have walked away from those conversations feeling nourished by the trust and vulnerability of my classmates and the sense of comradery in grief and pain. It doesn't make the hurt any lighter, but god is it such a relief to shoulder the burden together rather than alone.

> Yet, even after losing one of our own to suicide, why does it seem like no one is talking about it?

I think back to those lonely nights where I wished I were dead and realize these conversations are exactly what I needed. What a difference it would have made for me to know that I was not suffering alone, that there were those around me who were going through the same, or had gone through it and survived. I am so sad and so angry for the Sophia who felt they had no one to turn to, who went to class surrounded by people more like them than they ever knew and yet felt so alone.

We need to seriously think about what gets communicated when we don't communicate. When the message after a student's death by suicide is: "Here are some resources that you should reach out to if you need help," it puts the onus and responsibility on the person struggling. Suicidal thoughts, depression and other mental health struggles are incredibly isolating as is. They tell you that you are alone in your suffering, and weak for it. That no one cares and no one will come to save you.

> If the message when you need help is that you have to search for it yourself, all that many people will hear is that there is no help for them.

In those dark weeks, it took all of my energy to get out of bed, to maybe make it to class (oftentimes I didn't) and to function as somewhat of a human being. Every cell in my body was working in overdrive just to stay alive, and yet I was being asked to make all of these calls and chase after all of these resources and self-advocate time and time again on top of it all. It felt so isolating, unmanageable and deeply, deeply unfair.

If the message when you need help is that you have to search for it yourself, all that many people will hear is that there is no help for them.

Equally damaging is the message, while well-intentioned, to "check in on your friends." Often, people experiencing suicidal thoughts view themselves as a huge burden on their friends and loved ones. The weight of our own sadness and hurt feels too large to bear, so how could we imagine putting that on the people we care about? When we hear over and over again this message that seems to imply that our friends are the ones responsible for our survival, it only heightens that feeling of being a burden and deepens the isolation.

The reality is that we are 20-year-olds. We are not equipped to handle our friends' mental health crises on our own, nor can we alone save our friends from the demons (and chemicals) within their own minds.

Suicide is an institutional failing, not an individual one. We as a community, and certainly Middlebury as an institution, have failed to create a culture where we can talk about suicide and provide support for those experiencing suicidal thoughts or urges. We have failed to create room for those whose full effort is spent on surviving and celebrate them for doing so rather than punishing them for falling behind on schoolwork or missing classes. And we have failed now, in the wake of Yan's death by suicide, to show those experiencing similar struggles that we care at all.

> The reality is that we are 20-year-olds. We are not equipped to handle our friends' mental health crises on our own.

We need to change, and we need to talk about suicide. Before it's too late.

If you are thinking about suicide, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255).

Introducing our new Multimedia section and Photo of the Week contest

The Campus is starting a Multimedia section, which will include subsections in stand alone photos, photo essays, podcasts and documentary videos. Stand alone photos will be selected each week from a community wide photo contest "Photo of the Week", which welcomes submissions from students, staff, faculty and community members, and will accept images taken with a phone or a camera.

To sign-up to be on the email list of upcoming prompts in multimedia, go to go/multimedia or scan the QR code.

To submit your photos for the Photo of

Multimedia Interest Form

Photo of the Week

MIDDLEBURY FARMER'S MARKET
at the VFW on Exchange Street

every Saturday...year round • 9am -12:30pm
ORGANIC MEATS AND PRODUCE! HOT PREPARED FOOD! ARTISAN GOODS!

"The Orphan Muses" unpacks Canada's most dysfunctional family

By JACQUELINE QIU
Contributing Writer

COURTESY OF TOD BALFOUR

Becca Berlind '21.5 and Jacob Raymond '23 (pictured) played two of the siblings in "The Orphan Muses."

Brought to life by the Middlebury College Department of Theatre, "The Orphan Muses" touches on themes of abandonment, oppression and liberation within the comedic framework of the wacky, dysfunctional Tanguay family.

Written by the Canadian playwright Michel Marc Bouchard in 1989, this play tells the story of four vastly different siblings unexpectedly reuniting the day before Easter Sunday.

Each of the four siblings has attempted to deal with the trauma of their mother's abandonment 20 years ago in different ways that often create interpersonal conflict with the family.

Catherine (Becca Berlind '21.5), the eldest sibling, assumes the role of the uptight matriarchal figure that was vacated by their mother. She desperately tries to control the family's financial affairs and promote stability, especially related to the actions of the youngest sibling, Isabelle (Madison Middleton '22.5). Isabelle is forced to be dependent on her sister's support but continuously wishes to pursue her own path outside of their home.

Meanwhile, middle siblings Luc (Jacob Raymond '23) and Martine (Masha Shaposhnikova '21.5) have left the region, but with very different intentions. Luc travels around Spain, in an attempt to find their mother, while Martine enlists and becomes a military officer in Germany.

When they reunite, the three elder Tanguay siblings are forced to confront the lie they told the youngest sister, Isabelle, that their mother had died — which they had conceived to spare her from the truth of their mother's actual abandonment. However, the siblings discover that Isabelle has been secretly executing a plan to force her siblings to confront their own failings.

The selection of this play for the Department of Theatre's fall 2021 season was intensely personal. During his decision process, Director and Professor of Theatre Cláudio Medieros specifically chose Bouchard's play due to both his connection to its poignant themes and its relevance in his life.

"I realized that ["The Orphan Muses"] had a deeper meaning for me because I lost both my parents recently. I had a very close and beautiful relationship with my mother," Medieros said. "This play is not that story — it is about four siblings who are orphaned. It's all about surviving the trauma of being abandoned by their mother — which is not my story — but the mother is so central to ["The Orphan Muses"] and I'm a recent orphan... so I thought 'wow, I'm doing a play with an absent mother.'"

"The Orphan Muses" is ultimately a story that highlights how each sibling must reconcile their individual experiences and shortcomings with a desire to liberate themselves from this perpetual state of family dysfunction, personal alienation and collective grief. Martine and Luc's lives function around the precept that their queer identities must conform to norms of heterosexuality. Catherine, on the other hand, desperately seeks to fulfill her desire for female maternity that arose in the wake of her mother's departure by strictly parenting Isabelle. She also struggles financially, having to work two jobs to sustain Luc's fantasies. Not only does Isabelle live under Catherine's high standards, she is ridiculed for having a disability that, in reality, does not impede her, but fortifies her complexity as a character that is neurodivergent.

"The play is about liberation from trauma, both individually and collectively," Middleton said. "The great gift that Bouchard gives the actor playing Isabelle is that he does not diagnose her with anything. [The character of Isabelle] is all based on what people say about her and what she says about herself."

Berlind affirmed how all the characters in this play, especially Catherine, seem domineering at times, but their attitude functions as a survival mechanism for life in an unjust world.

"It is at first really easy to see these characters as really ugly and really vicious, but, as the play unfolds, you can see more and more [...] that they're just hurting," Berlind said. "This viciousness, this ugliness, is because they're hurting. They're hurting each other. They're hurting themselves. They're hurting under systems of oppression."

At the same time, "The Orphan Muses" is often funny because of how it skillfully highlights the dynamism of a dysfunctional family. Audience members found themselves laughing at the actors' comedic timing as they cracked sarcastic jokes about their own misfortunes.

As a tragicomedy, this juxtaposition of humor with heavy themes catches and sustains the attention of the audience.

"It's an expressionist style of acting, it's not total realism. There's almost an element of slapstick or big physical comedy," Berlind said.

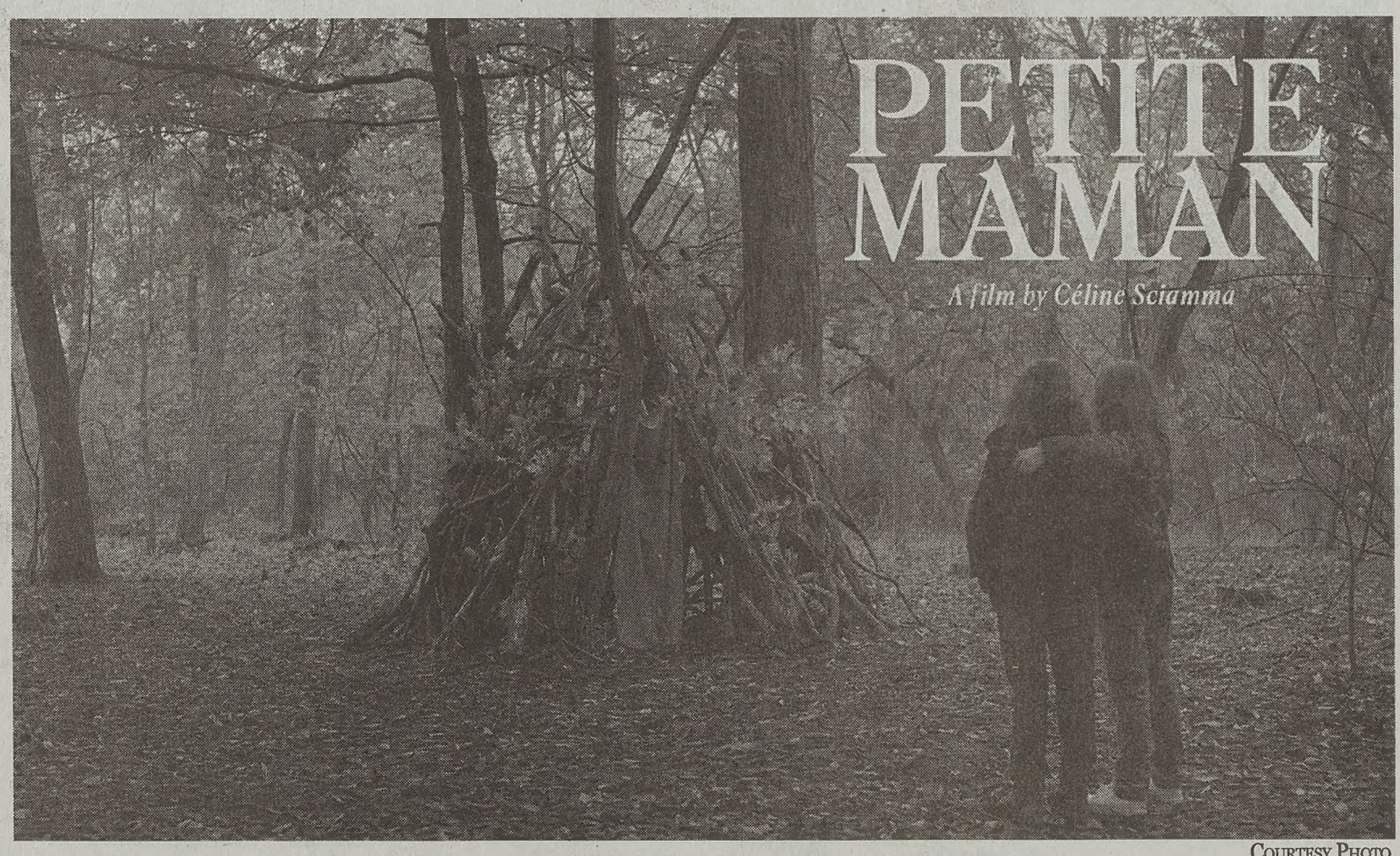
With all of its complexities, "The Orphan Muses" seeks to present profound, yet universal themes that speak to everyone.

"To take down the walls of exclusivity and gatekeeping... there has to be a sense of we're doing this [theatre] for the community, not just for academia," Middleton said. "With "Orphan Muses," what I find exciting is that we are telling the story of four different people and an audience member can go 'Oh my God, I get that' at different moments for each person."

"The Orphan Muses" thoughtfully provokes deep questions on how liberty from our personal struggles can be achieved.

Reel Critic: "Petite Maman"

By EMILY HOGAN
Layout Editor



COURTESY PHOTO

"Petite Maman," the latest movie in the Hirschfield International Film Series, uses a minimalist approach to tell a poignant story of family and friendship bound through loss and love. The film opens in a nursing home, with the camera following closely behind a child as she says goodbye to each resident of the building. The viewer follows her until she finally enters an empty room and approaches a young woman, her mother, taking down the family's personal effects from the room. The girl then sits on the empty hospital bed, unable to say goodbye to this last person.

The film uses simple scenes with minimal dialogue to tell the story of Nelly (Josephine Sanz), an 8-year-old girl who just lost her grandmother, as she copes with her first feelings of grief. The family packs up the grandmother's home which is visually portrayed through a combination of striking domestic images: a still unpainted patch of patterned wallpaper behind the kitchen cabinets, a secret closet hidden in the wall and a long, dimly-lit corridor.

In the woods, Nelly meets Marion (Gabrielle Sanz), who bears a remarkable resemblance to her, building a hut, and the two instantly become friends. When Marion invites Nelly inside her home, viewers begin to piece together the overarching structural device of the film. "Petite Maman" juxtaposes scenes of Marion's and Nelly's identical homes, signaling to the viewer that Nelly has met her mother at the childhood stage of her life. Marion soon undergoes an unspecified operation identical to the one Nelly's mother went through during childhood, giving Nelly the opportunity to meet Marion's mother, her grandmother as a younger woman, again. In a touching scene of familial love, Marion's mother ties Nelly's tie, and the two attempt a crossword puzzle together, reminiscent of the film's opening scene in the nursing home. Through this familial connection, Nelly is able to fully say a heartfelt goodbye to her grandmother in a way that offers closure.

The film's focus on the seemingly mundane gives it a brilliant touch. Inside Marion's home, the kitchen wallpaper is identical to the unpainted remnants left behind in Nelly's grandmother's home. In silence, Nelly explores the corridor with a secret closet just like hers at home.

The film explores the unquestioning nature of children, even when faced with the bizarre. At the sudden realization that Marion is her mother, only as a child, Nelly relays this information to Marion, who displays the utmost confidence in her words. Viewers are encouraged to believe the possibility that Marion and Nelly are tied in a way that breaks realistic notions of time. The film's minimalistic style leaves much for the viewer to infer. The audience must trust that Marion and Nelly's mother are one, urging viewers towards their childhood roots of blind faith.

The film's brilliance comes from the fact that audiences view the world through the lens of a child, with the camera almost always at the level of her eyesight. Nelly's lack of overthinking gives the film an air of innocence that befits a story of childhood experiences. The loss of a loved one seen through the eyes of a child is juxtaposed with accompanying heavy feelings of grief by her mother and father. Intimate, silent family moments are intertwined with vibrant scenes in the rustling woods as Nelly and Marion build a hut out of fallen trees. As children do, Nelly bounces from one moment to the next, deeply aware yet not outwardly noticeable. There are moments in the film, however, when the levity of the situation intensifies Nelly's emotions to an extreme, causing a childlike reaction. When Nelly realizes Marion's true identity, she runs out of the house immediately and back to her home, suddenly intensely aware of the emotional gravity of the situation.

Despite its short runtime, "Petite Maman" tells a thorough, character-driven story that is beautifully easy to absorb as an audience member. The alluring scenes in the woods full of orange- and yellow-tinted leaves and the magnificent beauty of the lake are effortlessly consumed by viewers, eliciting reactions of childlike wonder and an urge to explore nature.

"Petite Maman" closes out with Nelly and her adult mom on the bare kitchen floor, all items in the home seemingly packed away. With little space between them, the emotional tenderness and love between the two is amplified, leaving viewers with a sense of nostalgia for the familiarity of close relationships. While uncertainty about the future is difficult to grapple with, the film illustrates that the fear associated with this uncertainty can and should be eliminated, urging viewers to find contentment and beauty in unpredictability itself.

Evo Dance Crew returns to Wilson Hall for "Resurrection"

Emmanuel Tamrat/The Middlebury Campus

Founded in 2014 by BIPOC students, Evo is an inclusive dance crew open for dancers of all skill levels

By ALEXANDRA BURNS
Contributing Writer

"Thriller" by Michael Jackson faded out and the rumble of stomping feet echoed across Wilson Hall as the crowd eagerly awaited the start of Evolution Dance Crew's (Evo) annual Halloween dance show.

On Oct. 30, Evo presented "The Resurrection of Evolution," a performance whose title was chosen both as an allusion to Halloween as well as to their long-awaited return to indoor, in-person shows. The show lasted approximately an hour, with 12 main dance numbers in addition to an assortment of shorter transition pieces. The last time the crew performed a show in Wilson Hall was in the fall of 2019, somewhat ironically titled, "The Mask Has Fallen."

"One thing we are doing differently this year is putting up two shows in one night, and we've never done that in Evo history," Evo Co-President Seiha San '22 said. "We wanted the opportunity to present what we've been working on to more people."

Evo held a 7 p.m. and a 9 p.m. show, allowing for a larger general audience of 800, with the earlier show nearly full and later show sold out. The show has sold out for the past couple of years and the dance crew has now grown to over 50 people, 10 more than in 2019. Not only was the show back in Wilson Hall, but the audience was comprised of more than just students. Because the performance coincided with Homecoming Weekend, faculty, staff, parents, alumni and young children populated the crowd, especially at the earlier show. A dinosaur, Sherlock Holmes and Catman were also in attendance, as some of the audience showed up in costume.

Before the show began, co-presidents San and Aliana Thomas-Adams '22 came onto the stage to introduce Evo's mission. The group was founded in 2014 by BIPOC students as a space for people whose experiences and body types hadn't typically been represented in the Middlebury dance scene.

"A lot of our dancers are untrained. They evolve with the dance crew," San said. "[...] We strive to create a space where all of our dancers feel supported. Some of them have not performed in front of an audience before." San then asked the audience to be generous with their applause.

The curtains parted and the lights came on for the first number, "She Don't Text," named after the song it was performed to, with dancers decked out in white collared shirts, black dress pants, ties and black masks. The piece was brought to life by first-time choreographer Kent Canonigo '24, who joined Evo last year during the pandemic. While he was grateful to be a part of the group last year, he missed the energy of a big audience.

"I was on autopilot the whole time, but it felt good to be out there," Canonigo said.

This first dance, along with every piece that followed, left the audience spellbound. The crew swayed, they shook their hips, they twirled, and they did it as one. Whether the number was joyful, sad, sensual or anywhere in between, the dancers performed with intense focus and enthusiasm.

Throughout the show, yelps, cheers and whistles could be heard from the enthusiastic audience. Audience member Kristen Morgenstern '24 was there to support her roommate, Makeda Hevrin '24, who is part of the crew. Morgenstern expressed her delight at the novelty of the indoor performance space complete with lights and powerful sound.

"This was the first real dance show I've seen, and I've never seen anything like it," she said.

Morgenstern belongs to one of the other dance troupes on campus, which like Evolution, performed on the outdoor stage on Battell Beach last spring. While the outdoor stage provided a safe and feasible approach for dance groups to perform, it came with its setbacks.

"When I had my show last spring, people were walking by on the sidewalk and there was literally a quidditch match happening next to us."

Brittney Azubuike '22, Evo treasurer and crew member, joined the group in the spring of 2020, and was getting ready to perform in her first show when the school announced that students would be sent home. This was Azubuike's debut performance, and she dazzled the audience with her seemingly effortless moves. She choreographed four numbers in the show, including a seductive pair number with Jarlenys Mendez '23 titled "The Feels."

"It was very much a romantic duet. Guy sees girl. Girl sees guy," Azubuike said.

Azubuike also choreographed "Feel Good Inc." in which dancers moved in rigid, robotic motions and wore white thespian masks in addition to their face masks.

Another number that particularly excited the crowd was titled "Squid Game" and was based on the new, wildly popular Netflix series of the same name. Given the praise and media coverage of the television series, the number felt especially relevant in speaking to the cultural moment.

Choreographer Jaab Veskijkul '22.5 noted how the process of putting together the number was somewhat accelerated. Because it was a transition piece, it came together just a couple of weeks before the show, and he didn't teach the dancers the piece until the week prior to the performance. Transition pieces are shorter pieces that the crew sandwiches between the longer, more rehearsed pieces. After Veskijkul finished watching "Squid Game," he realized he could use the show's notoriety to his advantage and envisioned his choreography based on events in the first episode.

The final number of the show was the "Newbie Piece," which is the debut for all the new dancers. Thomas-Adams helped to choreograph this number. There were 17 new dancers this fall, marking the largest group to ever join Evo in a single semester.

"It's a great way to get to know all the new members at once," Thomas-Adams said. "There's so many of them who have never danced before, so we feel honored and excited that they want to come try that with Evo."

Emmanuel Tamrat/The Middlebury Campus

Evo's Halloween show "Evo: Resurrection" coincided with Homecoming weekend, allowing for parents, alumni and students alike to enjoy the performance.

WRMC RADIO ROUNDUP: DON'T BREAK OUT YOUR CHRISTMAS PLAYLISTS JUST YET

By THE WRMC EXEC BOARD

*RIYL (recommended if you like)

General Manager's Pick — Maddie Van Beek '22.5

Album: "Friends That Break Your Heart" — James Blake
Genre: Experimental R&B
RIYL: Bon Iver, Moses Sumney, slowthai, SZA, JID, SwaVay, Monica Martin
Blurb: If you're looking for an album to rip your heart out, this is it. I don't think I will ever get sick of James Blake's voice or his carefully composed instrumentals. In "Friends That Break Your Heart," Blake abandons his usual fragmented and disrupted sound for something more linear, leaving the lyrics center-stage. Despite its simplicity, "Friends that Break Your Heart" takes you on a vivid and heart-wrenching journey.

Library Manager's Pick — Kyle Hooker '24

Album: "Running On Ice" — Vertical Horizon
Genre: Folk/Alt-Rock
RIYL: Jackopierce, Dave Matthews Band, Gin Blossoms
Blurb: This is another album I came across while filing CDs at the station. I had heard of the band before but was not familiar with their songs. Overall, it's a really strong album with great vocals and harmonies. I especially like track three, "Fragments."

Music Director's Pick — Chad Kim '23

Album: "La Araña Es La Vida" — Kid Congo & the Pink Monkey Birds
Genre: Psych, Garage Rock
RIYL: Frankie and the Witch Fingers, KGLW, Post Animal
Blurb: Instead of thinking of this relic of the dune as an exploration of alternative-psych-garage-rock, this album serves as an impeccable example of the developing eco-genres known as SandCore or DesertCore. This album sounds like movement, just like your feet on hot sands at noon, and each track imbues the individual with the solar energy of a thousand suns to fuel typical desert-rat antics. My top track is "La Araña," but any track on this album is honestly a gem.

Tech Director's Pick — Dan Frazo '23

Album: "Somewhere Flowers Grow" — Electric Looking Glass
Genre: Psychedelic Rock, Baroque Pop
RIYL: The Byrds, Drugdealer, The Marias
Blurb: Channeling '60s-esque psychedelic energy akin to some of Laurel Canyon's best, Electric Looking Glass isa time machine of finely aged sounds and effects. Think Earl Grey meets Champagne, polka dots meet zebra stripes, analog meets digital — Electric Looking Glass seamlessly merges opposite phenomena into a smooth, sappy, spirited bit of self-recorded music in "Somewhere Flowers Grow."

Concert Manager's Pick — Luke Robins '23

Album: "Summer's Over" — Jordana and TV Girl
Genre: Dreamy Bedroom Pop
RIYL: Jay Som, SALES, Beach Fossils, Kate Bollinger
Blurb: This collaboration from Jordana and TV Girl dropped earlier this month when the two were touring together. The album centers Jordana's voice among catchy instrumentals buried under light ambient sounds and audio fuzz. With an aesthetic that melds bedroom pop, garage and a stoner coffee shop, "Summer's Over" delivers a fun and worthwhile listen.

Pia Contreras

DON'T MISS THIS

Matthew Whitaker Quartet: Jazz

At just 20 years old, jazz keyboardist Matthew Whitaker is a once-in-a-generation musical talent. He's been performing across the globe since age 11, opening for Stevie Wonder at the Apollo Theater. At a tender 13, Whitaker was the youngest artist to be endorsed by Hammond organs and was soon named a Yamaha Artist, becoming the youngest musician to join their stellar roster of jazz pianists. Also an acclaimed composer, Whitaker won the ASCAP Foundation's Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composers Award in 2019 and 2020. It's this depth of talent that draws audiences in when Whitaker and his talented bandmates command the stage.

Saturday, Nov. 6 at 7:30 p.m. ET at the Mahaney Arts Center's Robison Hall and online. Tickets starting at $5.

Parker Merrill Speech Competition 2021: Championship Round

In a tradition dating back to 1825, students compete for the title of Middlebury Speaker of the Year and a top prize of $500. The finalists will deliver 4–5 minute speeches on the topic of "Rants and Raves" to a general audience. Judges will choose a champion and two runners-up. Produced by Oratory Now. Visit go/parkermerrill for more information.

Friday, Nov. 5 at 7 p.m. ET at Coltrane Lounge. Free.

Middlebury College Choir Concert

The Middlebury College Choir is hosting their first fall in-person concert of the semester. Stop by for a chance to hear students sing a repertoire of spirituals, settings of poetry and Latin.

Sunday, Nov. 7 at 3 p.m. ET at Middlebury Chapel. Free.

Theatre Think Tank

Theatre Think Tank's (TTT) inaugural meeting is occurring this weekend. TTT is meant to be a casual space to explore new creative acting ventures. Think of it like WOMP but for performance art! TTT is created and hosted by the Theatre Department Student Representatives and The Hepburn Zoo. All kinds of performances are welcome: scenes and monologues, dance, spoken word, improv, etc. Go to go/theatrethinktank to sign up.

Friday Nov. 5 at 6 p.m. in the Hepburn Zoo. Free.

Despite first-round playoff loss to Colby, men's rugby reflects positively on fall season

By CHARLES CROUNSE
Staff Writer

COURTESY OF BO EBBY

Men's rugby captain Red Douoguih '22.5 escapes a tackle during the Panthers' 20–17 win against Holy Cross on Oct. 23.

After a first-round playoff loss to Colby last Saturday, the season is over for men's rugby. But despite their exit from competition, Middlebury College Rugby Club (MCRC) has a lot to be proud of.

The team pieced together three impressive wins to open the season, only conceding seven points over those three games while scoring a resounding 163. The team's crowning achievement came in their fourth match, when they battled bravely to a 20–17 victory over nationally recognized Holy Cross, who entered the match ranked No. 1 in the small school division of National Collegiate Rugby.

Against Holy Cross, the Panthers came out with fire in their belly, putting up two consecutive scores to take an early 10–0 lead before the Crusaders even managed a legitimate possession. Holy Cross regrouped and showed their prowess, however, as they battled back to a 10–10 scoreline going into halftime.

"That was right where we needed to be," club president Griffin Shapiro '22 said. "We had a fresh 40 minutes in the second half against the best team in the country; we had played for that all season."

The Panthers once again started in red hot form, seizing a 15–10 lead. Holy Cross, not to be deterred, fired back shortly after and grabbed a late 17–15 lead. With just over a minute left to play, Alex Milligan '25 intercepted a pass between two Holy Cross backs and raced it over the goal-line for a try to put the Panthers up, 20–17.

"They almost got us back right in the dying seconds of the game," Shapiro said. "Our defense came up with a big stop to keep them out."

Along with team captains Matt Dulaney '22 and Red Douoguih '22.5, Shapiro felt the result was not only a huge achievement for the team but also a result that was years in the making.

"That was the pinnacle of really four years of work from our seniors," Shapiro said. "In the past we've always had great athletes, but this year we've had something special out there where we've connected as a team and been able to run some really great plays."

The win saw Middlebury usurp Holy Cross as the top ranked team in its division, earning them a spot in the regional playoffs. But in a playoff match-up against Colby, the winner of the men's small college north division, the Panthers fell to a defeat.

"A lot of guys on the team were devastated to lose," Shapiro said. "It was a tough defeat, but the reaction shows the passion our team had; everyone really bought into it."

Although Shapiro and his fellow seniors may not get to play another fall season in a Middlebury shirt, he was highly optimistic and well-spirited following the conclusion of the season.

"The group of guys that showed up in September was hardly a rugby team, with guys who had hardly played and guys who had never touched a ball," Shapiro said. "Now we have a program that has proven it's capable of competing with the best. I think the club will remain at this high level for a long time to come."

Seven questions with Skylar Diamandis '23, men's swim and dive

By BLAISE SIEFER
Senior Sports Editor

Skylar Diamandis '23, from Salt Lake City, UT, is a junior on the men's swim and water polo teams. In this installment of "Seven Questions," Diamandis discusses why he chose Middlebury, his experience on the swim and water polo teams, and his elevator pitch to prospective Middlebury students.

Blaise Siefer: Why Middlebury?

Skylar Diamandis: I toured other NESCAC schools and Middlebury was the most inviting. The people here seemed the most friendly. And it was definitely the prettiest. Academically, I was very interested in environmental studies, and I knew Midd had a great program — so that was a big factor, too.

BS: What's your favorite part about being on the swim team and why?

SD: The people and sense of community. We train so much that we all really bond with each other. Sometimes, we don't really want to be [at training] at 6 a.m., but we're all in it together. The team culture and people hyping you up make it fun for me.

BS: You're also the captain of the water polo team at Middlebury. When did you get into the sport, and what do you like about it?

SD: I started playing at summer camp, right after I finished sixth grade. I had never played before — I wasn't even really swimming at the time. I really liked it, and when I got back from summer camp, my parents found a team in Salt Lake, and I started playing then. It's both a mental and athletic challenge. There's a lot of different things to think about while playing. But you also don't get a break — you are treading water the whole time and someone may be trying to drown you. The combination of those things is something I was really drawn to.

BS: What are you studying at Middlebury and why does it interest you?

SD: I'm an environmental studies and chemistry joint major. I'm also working on a German minor. Environmental chemistry interests me because, growing up in Salt Lake, we had really terrible air pollution all winter, and it actually affected me — it wasn't just some concept. And as far as German goes, I wanted to take Spanish when I got here, but Spanish 101 was full. So I was like "I'll take German, I guess."

BS: If you had to work at one local Middlebury business, what would it be and why?

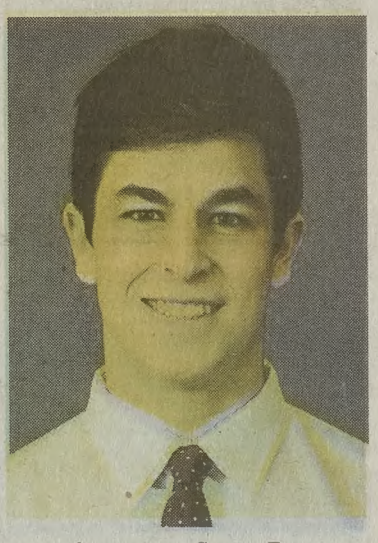
SD: Costellos. The people there are so nice, and the woman who is always working is the most appreciative person every time I go there.

BS: If you had to live in one building for all four years at Middlebury, which dorm would you choose and why?

SD: I would have to choose the Ross complex. I lived there freshman and sophomore year and having the dining hall inside during the winter was game-changing.

BS: What would your elevator pitch to prospective Middlebury students be?

SD: Rigorous but rewarding academics. Small enough that you can get to know everyone, but not too small where you don't meet people. And it's like summer camp, with a lot more work.

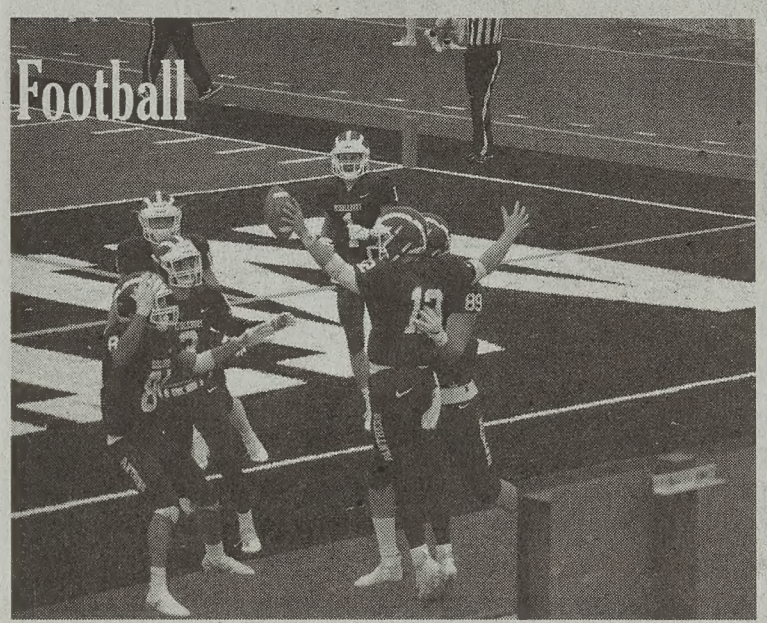


COURTESY OF SKYLAR DIAMANDIS

Week in Review: Varsity teams go undefeated at home, cross country teams place high at NESCAC Championship

By BLAISE SIEFER
Senior Sports Editor

Football



Courtesy of Benjy Renton

Quarterback Will Jernigan '21.5 (#12) celebrates a touchdown against Bowdoin.

Football earned its second win of the season on Saturday, edging out Bowdoin, 43–35. Quarterback Will Jernigan '21.5 was particularly stellar in the win, rushing for 203 yards and throwing for 200. For his efforts, Jernigan was named NESCAC Offensive Player of the Week. Donovan Wood '24 was also a key contributor on the Panthers offense, catching six passes for 159 yards. Wood leads the team with 497 receiving yards on the season.

The Panthers have two more games this season. Next Saturday, they visit Hamilton College, and then the following Saturday, they host Tufts.

Men's Soccer

Courtesy of Benjy Renton

Men's soccer celebrates their win against Wesleyan in front of fans on Saturday, Oct. 30. The Panthers won in a penalty shootout, 5–4, after the match finished 0–0.

Saturday's match between men's soccer and Wesleyan was one to remember.

In the tightly contested NESCAC Quarterfinals game, the teams traded chances throughout, but the 0–0 deadlock wasn't broken through full time and two ten-minute overtime periods. In the penalty kick shootout that followed, the Panthers were perfect from the spot, scoring five straight kicks to beat Wesleyan, 5–4. Ryan Grady '23 made a huge stop on Wesleyan's first penalty, and Jordan Saint-Louis '24 punched home the decisive kick.

For his efforts, Grady was named the NESCAC Player of the Week. Grady currently leads the NESCAC in shutouts (10) and goals against average (.359).

On Saturday, the Panthers face Tufts in the NESCAC Semifinals in New London, Conn. Should they win, they will face the winner of the other semifinal game between Connecticut College and Colby on Sunday.

Volleyball

Courtesy of Benjy Renton

The seniors on women's volleyball pose for a picture on senior night. From left: Corley Doyle '22, Maggie Wise '22, Ali Wheeler '22, Jane Nelson '22, Isabella Marcus '22 and assistant coach Jack English '21.5.

For the first time since 2012, women's volleyball has won 20 regular season games.

Last Friday and Saturday, the team defeated both Williams and Hamilton, respectively, in three straight sets.

Before Friday's game, the Panthers celebrated senior night. This season, there are five seniors on the team: Corley Doyle '22, Isabella Marcus '22, Jane Nelson '22, Maggie Wise '22 and Ali Wheeler '22.

Against Williams, Wise led all players in kills (11) and Gabbie O'Toole '25 earned a match-high 32 assists. Lucy Ambach '23 also played well, recording five blocks.

On Saturday, volleyball sustained their momentum and defeated Hamilton, 3–0. Katie Kraczkowsky '24 (14 digs), Doyle (14 kills, three blocks) and O'Toole (34 assists) led the way for the Panthers.

With the pair of wins, the Panthers are now 20–4 on the season and enter the NESCAC tournament as the fourth seed. The tournament will span from Friday, Nov. 5 to Sunday, Nov. 7 in Brunswick, Maine. The Panthers open the competition against fifth-seeded Amherst on Friday at 7:30 p.m.

Field Hockey

Courtesy of Benjy Renton

Field hockey celebrates a goal during their 4–0 triumph over Bates on Saturday, Oct. 30.

Top-seeded field hockey earned their 16th win of the season on Saturday, defeating Bates, 4–0, in the NESCAC Quarterfinals. The Panthers are 16–0 for the season and have now won 43 straight games on Kohn Field.

Erin Nicholas '22 opened the scoring just three minutes into the match, and then Panthers never looked back. Nicholas scored a second at the 34:49 mark, and goals from Isabel Chandler '21.5 and Audrey Lazar '23 rounded out the dominant victory.

Since the Panthers are the top seed in the NESCAC, they will host the NESCAC Tournament this weekend. On Saturday, Middlebury will play Trinity, followed by a head-to-head match between Bowdoin and Tufts. On Sunday, the two winners will vie for the NESCAC title at 12 p.m.

Men's Cross Country

On Sunday, men's cross country placed second in the NESCAC Championship meet at Wickham Park in Manchester, Connecticut. The Panthers (59 points) were narrowly defeated by Williams (51 points) in a tight race.

Zander Kessler '22.5 finished second overall in the 153-man event, running 25:05.4 for an 8k (5:03 per mile). Drew Donahue '25 (seventh), Quin McGaugh '22 (10th), Alec Gironda '24 (11th) and Max Cluss '23 (29th) also scored for the Panthers. Middlebury was the only team in the NESCAC to place four runners in the top 11.

The Panthers will now shift their focus to NCAA Regionals on Nov. 13 in Waterford, Conn.

Women's Cross Country

Women's cross country (93 points) finished third in the NESCAC Championship race, just behind Williams (65 points) and Tufts (78 points)

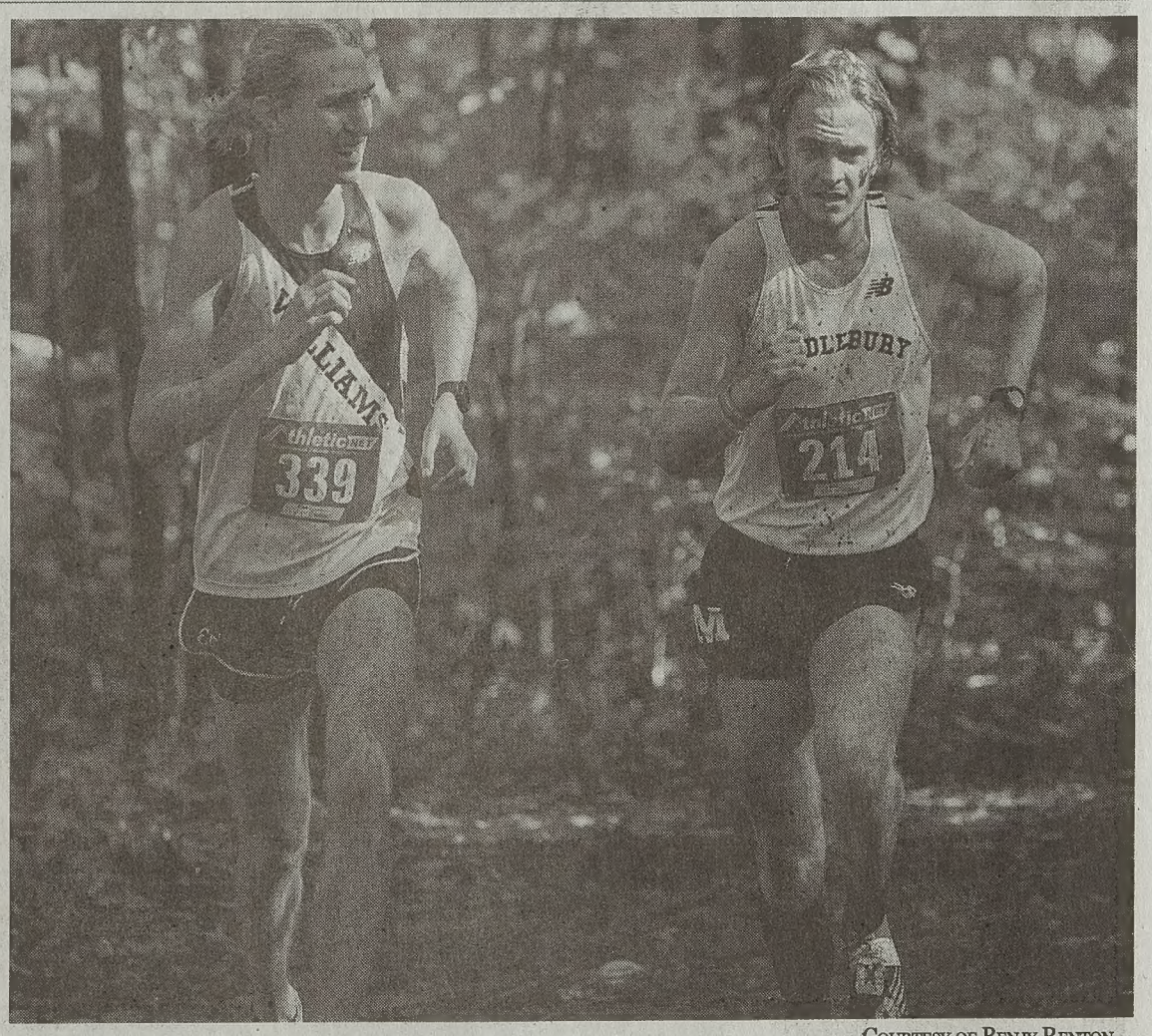
Cassie Kearney '22 led the way for Middlebury, finishing second overall (22:59) out of 148 participants in the 6k race. Bea Parr '25 wasn't far behind, finishing in seventh. Morgane Orcutt '25 (25th), Kate Kenny '23 (29th) and Nicole Johnson '22 (30th) also scored for the Panthers.

The team is back in action on Nov. 13, when they will race at NCAA Regionals in Waterford, Conn.

Women's Soccer

A late strike from Eliza Robinson '21.5 helped women's soccer to a 2–1 win over Connecticut College on Saturday at South Street Field. Connecticut College opened the scoring early in the second half, but Joely Virzi '24 scored the equalizer less than two minutes later. Robinson's game-winning goal in the 77th minute was her third of the season.

Women's soccer will face Amherst College in Amherst, Mass. next Saturday in the NESCAC Quarterfinals. If they win, they will face the winner of Wesleyan-Hamilton in the finals.



Courtesy of Benjy Renton

Zander Kessler '22.5 (right) finished second at the NESCAC Cross Country Championship meet on Sunday, Oct. 31.

WOMP RETURNS TO IN-PERSON AFTER A SEMESTER ON AIR

By DEVIN SANTIKARMA
Photojournalist

Liam Wynne helping set up a performance.

There are a number of "firsts" that students experience when they arrive on Middlebury's campus that leave them with a sense of place and belonging: the first Vermont fall, the first day of classes or their first ride down the Snowbowl.

For me, it was WOMP.

Short for "Wednesday Open Mic Party," WOMP drew me in with the music spilling out down the steps of Gifford. Not knowing what to expect, I sat and listened to an original song by singer-songwriter Marina Prikis '25, entitled "Take me to the Lakeside." Powering through technical difficulties as a full crowd watched on, she delivered a stellar professional performance to a crowd of both new and seasoned WOMPers.

Nearly eight years after its inception in February 2014, these open mic nights have served as fun, semi-spontaneous events where students can perform poetry, stand up comedy and musical performances of all genres, from bluegrass to live beatmaking.

"It's a mid-week stress-buster, for sure," says Liam Wynne '21.5, the one-man organizer of WOMP. "I would even say music is a secondary aspect of WOMP, with the first being to congregate."

As I watched people gather in the Gamut room for my second round of WOMP, I heard people yell greetings over the music that plays between sets, talking and laughing and encouraging one another to perform. I see people transcend their campus lives for a night. I watch as the person in my Global Studies class belts out an intricate, soulful blues ballad. As the room grows louder, I can't help but notice how the stress of my deadlines and assignments gradually fades into obscurity as I tune into the music and the folks around me.

Singer-songwriter Marina Prikis '25.

WOMP's success this year is even more special given that Wynne inherited the one-man leadership role last spring when large gatherings weren't permitted. Collaborating with campus radio station, WRMC, WOMP was maintained last semester through weekly live recordings on air, typically consisting of three acts per night for listeners all around campus.

Even with this creative solution, the magic of WOMP simply can't be transmitted through airwaves.

"In a lot of ways it wasn't even WOMP," Wynne explained. "It lacked that impromptu, spontaneous quality of WOMP where no one knows who's going to play every night except the headliner."

> "It's a mid-week stress-buster, for sure. I would even say music is a secondary aspect of WOMP, with the first being to congregate."

Knowing the struggles they went through last year, I felt grateful as I watched Wynne in his zone behind the scenes. Helping manage microphones, sound levels, and individually setting up the space for each performance, all while training future organizers after his departure next year. His love for music and this space shows.

As individual spontaneous acts wrapped up, Untitled Feb Band took the stage and delivered the funkiest performance of the night, bringing the entire crowd out of their seats and dancing to an infectious wave of sound. I try my best to snap photos as shaking tambourines and dueling harmonies bounce off the art-covered walls of the Gamut room and spill into the cold October air outside.

As the night winds down (it is a weekday after all), I catch up with Wynne outside. I ask him what he wants people to know about WOMP.

"I would definitely encourage everyone to come to WOMP. It's a low stakes performance environment; it's impromptu, and it's a really nice relief from everything going on," he said.

If you're looking for a new "first," or simply want to hang with good people, WOMP is definitely the place to be.

PHOTOS BY DEVIN SANTIKARMA